

BLUES

A MAGAZINE OF NEW RHYTHMS

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VOLUME I

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JACQUES LE CLERCQ

JORDAN REVOLVER

I have always been glad that my acquaintance with Jordan Revolver was of the slightest. It is not that he was in any way unpleasant; on the contrary, he presented as pleasant, straightforward, untutored, untravelled and unintelligent a front as a score of rather middle-class young Middle Westerners that I encountered when I stayed at Apostle Island. Nor is it that I think I would have gathered a truer insight into his character and its effect upon his inauspicious career by being his familiar. I am glad I knew him only casually because it makes his story so intensely moving. Jordan Revolver was, in spite of his extraordinary name; I knew him, spoke to him occasionally and heard about him every time I saw Robert Laird. Jordan Revolver was, in spite of his apparently gruesome existence. He has been dead for several years now, to be sure. But not long enough for him to have passed into the mythical stage. For if the account of his life's progress gains my excited response, what will its effect be upon his many close acquaintances who loafed at school, danced at parties, lay on the beach, got drunk and indulged in the crude, direct life of his *milieu* in his company? At best, I could merely conjure up figments of my imagination and sensitiveness. But they can recall words he actually spoke to them, deeds he performed before their eyes and written testimony of his thoughts. Most of them, out of charity or mental laziness, doubtless consider him an example of the evils of self-indulgence, or they cite his grandmother who died of tuberculosis and insanity and shake their heads over the wonders of heredity, or they change the subject abruptly. Whereas I must of necessity be constantly evolving new notions concerning him. I have no data whatever. Each time I attempt to think of him as he was when I made his acquaintance, I realize that I have constructed my scheme of pseudo-observations merely to accord with the unprovable idea I hold at the moment. Certainly, out of the three sole phrases I can honestly assert he uttered, there is no possible meaning to be drawn. The fellow spoke with phlegm, his accent rarely varied, his voice was a long and even monotone. I do not even know if his intent was facetious. Sometimes, admitting it was, I am able to piece out a tolerably convincing story. It presents a reckless and sardonic savagery, with, under it all, a certain negatively admirable steadfastness. At other

times, if I take the words I know he spoke seriously, I evoke a weak figure, vague, wistful and pathetic in a downright stupid sort of way. Either seems plausible according to my frame of mind. But to be thoroughly rousing, a story requires more than plausibility. Jordan Revolver's is utterly simple yet shrouded in profound mystery; it may be tragic or purely dull; whatever one's speculation as to how the thing all really occurred, the facts stand. That is why it has always been to me an event of such absorbing concern. Such and such a thing happened; so much we know and so much only. As for the rest, to any question we pose, the question irremediably remains the answer. Again, the various sources from which the bare incidents are drawn must inevitably impair their impersonality.

I spent the summer of 1915 at Apostle Island in Lake Superior. I was staying with Robert Laird, my room-mate at college. It was a dull vacation but a rather healthy one I suppose. At all events, though the scene and the people among whom I was thrown were quite new to me, I do not seem to possess any but the most random memories about them. There was his conventional home, his conventional mother, his conventional life. I learned for the first time the technique of what later came to be known as necking or petting, but which in that rude day was termed loving, or with inelegant emphasis, loving-up. I found it more than futile, for my boyhood had been spent abroad. I remember going to somebody's house on the mainland where we all drank beer out of bottles in a magnificent Louis Seize dining-room. I remember numerous examples of the effects of alcohol upon my youthful contemporaries. I remember with equal and elementary exactitude at least a score of people, and, among them, Jordan Revolver.

He was about twenty at the time. If I am right, he was six feet tall, he was very thin, he had dark blue eyes with heavy brows and lashes particularly noticeable because his face was so long and so pallid. I seem to remember his hands as being proportionately small and heavy, with evident blue veining, the fingers spatulate. His voice was pitched in a medium and unarresting key; he spoke in a sing-song. He dressed much as anyone at Apostle Island; he swam excellently and earned some money occasionally by acting as life-guard on the beach. His father was dead; Jordan Revolver lived alone with his mother in not uncomfortable circumstances. He was at the time a Freshman at the University of Michigan. He played the banjo, told stories, danced and comported himself generally with inconspicuous adequacy. Only so far is my recollection of him virtually precise. It leaves me two different theories to evolve.

In the first instance, I think of him as a thoroughly superior person. He never pronounced a significant opinion because he was proud and aloof. He condescended to the world so wholly that the world was unaware of it and took him for granted. He elected to observe its outward conformities, but within him, his heart and soul were in a perpetual turmoil. For his pride and his aloofness were no more than a guard and a disguise. Deep in his inner conscience he detested the world and despised humanity with a shy, instinctive repulsion. Perhaps he even reached the stage of intellectualizing the feeling. God knows! At least his life would appear to display a total indifference to the compromises we consider as law; he began by obeying them either because his character was not entirely formed or because he honestly chose to test them by experience. Whether his savagery broke forth later as an irrepressible emotion reaching an intensity akin to madness or whether he arrived at it by a steadily progressive rationale, I cannot hazard to say. But if this side of him is the real, then surely his actions bespoke a violent and ruthless enmity to the ways of the world. Thus he would prove to have been, in its eyes, a vain, selfish, cruel, noxious creature.

Then there is the other version. He was proud and aloof because he was an inferior being. He was never aware of the outer world save when it imposed its unintelligible brutalities upon him. At great pains he had learned how to adapt himself to its ways so as to go unmolested as frequently as possible. His heart and soul were negative, in that they required stimulus almost entirely from other people. Deep in his inner conscience he loved the beauty and glamor of the world and envied humanity, longing for the ability to be naturally generic. Yet he lacked it, and thence came his crying weakness, in the shape of a signal complex of inferiority. The day he intellectualized that feeling, if intellectualize it he did, his fate was sealed. At least his life would appear to display a total impotence to the compromise we consider as law; his later savagery may be attributed to the fact that he was a vain, selfish, petty and helpless creature.

This is all guesswork. Besides the meagre details of his appearance cited above, my first memory of him includes only three statements he made me. Once he told me he would rather die outright than be an invalid and live a century. Another time he informed that a certain girl we knew whom I considered quite impossible would make some man a good wife. The third occasion I recall was when we were on the beach together one day he was acting as life-guard. It was a fine, warm day; the sunlight glistened up at us from the blue calm waters; one of the girls

was singing "*He's a rag picker.*" I made some comment on the weather. Jordan Revolver looked out over the lake and spoke. I believe his exact words were: "Best place in the world to drown yourself!"

One afternoon in the beginning of my Junior year at college, Robert Laird burst into my room. He appeared agitated. For a few moments he chatted with the two men who happened to be having tea with me. But he could not disguise his nervous impatience. Eventually my guests left. Robert threw himself on the window-seat.

"Remember Jordan Revolver?" he asked.

"Of course. Who could forget a man with such a name?"

"Had an extraordinary letter from Chet Blythe," Robert went on rapidly, "I heard Jordan had got into an awful lot of trouble. You know he was fired from Michigan last year. Got drunk once too often. Well, he went back home and worked. Before long he was running around with a girl called Rosie. Remember her?"

I did not.

"Well, she always was no damn good. I've known her since she was a kid; we were in high-school together. She looked pretty sometimes, because her eyes were very bright and wild. But they were deep-sunk. Her face was lean. Her body was very thin. I always sized her up as a terribly hungry person. She used to act very recklessly always and her gaiety was quite forced as though she could never manage to satisfy some devouring urge in her. Her mouth was red, usually moist-looking; it turned down at the corners with a sullen expression."

"A nymphomaniac?" I suggested.

"No, she was a Presbyterian. But there was always something wrong about her. I used to think she was consumptive. But she was sick too. See what I mean?"

Since those days, of course, a greater freedom of speech on the stage, in books and even in magazines has developed. Robert, moreover, was always shy and ill at ease when he had to call a spade a spade, though now he never hesitates to call a spade a shovel. I managed to elicit a more exact definition from him which accorded with my supposition. I thought: how ignorant of her, how careless or how unclean! Robert went on:

"I was always tipped off about her. I passed the word on to Jordan. God! what a damn fool! He paid no attention whatever. He went around with her everywhere; people were calling them engaged. You

know Rosie came from a pretty good family; her dad was a Judge. Why wouldn't Jordan believe I was telling him the truth?"

"People rarely do," I suggested. "Besides, he may have been in love with her, in which case you were lucky not to get knocked down."

"It's all too silly. Poor old Jordan, just beginning life and he has to go and handicap himself like that."

"Possibly it is a handicap, I don't know. It is accounted one today. But it is a handicap he shares with many of the greatest figures of history!"

It got around: you know how fellows talk. It got to his boss and Jordan was fired at once. They're very narrow at home, as you may remember. But that's not the worst: not by a damned sight. His boss was a bosom friend of the Judge, Rosie's father. So he naturally went to him and told him that Jordan was not a fit companion for his beautiful lily-white daughter. Imagine it! Then Jordan's uncle, who had always helped him, refused to see him. People gave him the cold shoulder right and left. Soon Chet was his only friend. That makes me sore as hell. I wish I had been there!"

"Have you ever stood in opposition to an entire community?" I asked casually. He disregarded the insinuation.

"Think of it though. A decent fellow like poor old Jordan goes and gets himself into the most terrible trouble through this fool girl. It loses him his job, his friends, his family, every support. And the girl's father is warned against Jordan's immorality. And the girl breaks everything off without so much as a 'Good-bye' or 'Thank you!' What do you call a thing like that? It's more than injustice."

"I should call it irony," I said. "Tell me more about it."

"Even his mother seems to have turned against him, Chet says. You see he went away to Detroit and got a job there. He used to come back home sometimes. The rumor goes that he got roaring drunk one night and beat up his mother. Nobody saw it; Mrs. Revolver never said it. But one Monday he left on the earliest train and she only appeared in public on Wednesday with a pair of bad bruises on her face. She told everybody she had fallen. I suppose she must have fallen, poor thing. And yet I can't believe that of Jordan, somehow. Still, he's never been back home since!"

"Has anyone seen him in Detroit?"

"Some of the boys occasionally do. He's got a clerk's job I think. I guess he's quite a booze-fighter. Poor Jordan!"

After the Armistice, I managed to get out of the army by joining a demobilized soldier stock company and touring the A. E. F. camps or playing in the Theatre Albert Premier in Paris. They were halcyon days. We were no longer military; our salaries were good; my companions were a mixed but very genial crowd; we really managed a very pleasant time. I suppose I have rarely been happier, certainly I was never so free of care. The future meant nothing whatever.

We used to spend long hours on the train when touring. Usually I found myself paired off with the old character man, a former vaudeville actor. His best friend was Bozy Gretz, one of the most unusual and engaging figures I have ever known. Bozy played policemen, Irish waiters, thugs and other roles that required a lumbering physique and a hard-boiled manner. Once he played a butler, and nothing on God's green earth was ever more comic. But that is another story.

Bozy, in civilian life, was a wharf rat. He looked the part. His eyes were extremely shifty, his teeth rodent, his nerve unlimited, his bearing at once furtive and defiant. He had an amazing sense of humor, the deep and eternal wit of the guttersnipe. He also possessed knowledge of incredible subjects which he retailed with incontrovertible originality. He stole from the stealings of the longshoremen. He drank like a tun. He would have filched the milk out of your tea unless you were his friend. Bozy was unique and splendid. If you were his friend, he made it his business to keep you amused twenty-four hours of the day. Bozy talking French (God save the mark!) Bozy imitating the Frog stage-hands. Bozy telling ribald stories. Bozy's repertoire of song.

One day to my amazement, Bozy mentioned "a guy called Revolver." I was dumbfounded.

"Sure, I knew the ——. We once did a job together. Stuck up a guy with a roll. Hundred apiece we scraped out of it. But this guy Revolver was no god damn good. Too ——— nervous. I heard he went up the river later. His ——— trouble was that he was one of them ——— educated ——— college ———. They land in Sing Sing every time."

The rest of the story is less sparse and probably more dependable. It came from Chet Blythe, now Robert Laird's partner in business, and it was narrated to me last December over a bottle of Scotch in Chet's room at the Biltmore. It presents the two other facts that complete the career of Jordan Revolver: his marriage, his death.

"Did you ever know Jordan Revolver?" Chet asked me.

"Of course. Who could forget a man with such a name?"

"Extraordinary fellow. Crazy, I guess."

"I have heard some unbelievable things about him."

"Nothing is unbelievable about him," Chet demurred. "If you told me he was alive today and President of a Bank, I wouldn't be surprised. His marriage in Detroit was the weirdest thing I ever heard of and he survived that. You know I often feel guilty about it. But then Jordan was such a madman!"

"Tell me about it."

"Would you really be interested?"

"Of course," I assured him. "Please fire away; here's another drink and a match for you. Get on!"

"When Jordan left home," Chet said, "he wrote to me rarely. A few of the fellows saw him occasionally. At one time he was a clerk in a department store. Somebody found him selling tobacco in a United Cigar Store. Bob Laird thinks he was a beggar in rags whom he bumped into and who suddenly vanished. But I met him in the street one day. He looked shabby with a defiant kind of flashiness. His greeting was a challenge to me to dare avoid him. He had been drinking, I knew. There was something of the tout's manner about him."

Chet took Jordan Revolver to lunch. He ate as though a meal was a comparative rarity. His shoes were very worn at the heels. His nails were dirty. Chet offered to lend him some money but Jordan refused. He even boasted he had plenty and bravely made as if to pay the check. Chet, knowing he had no money, gave him the satisfaction of the gesture, at least. They went on to a bar and Jordan became drunk first. Yet he had a seemingly inexhaustible thirst; he became bright-eyed, hectic, elliptically talkative and remained that way until the end. Chet, however, grew maudlin. At one, they rolled out of the place arm in arm.

"Money," Jordan said, "always this talk of money. It's the curse of our lives!"

"Shertainly is the cursh," Chet agreed.

Then Jordan turned about suddenly, seized Chet by the shoulder, looked him squarely in the eye and exploded: "You're a god damned liar. It's everything and you know it. If I had had money, would I be where I am today? What do you want to lie for?" To Chet, Jordan's eyes were those of a cur barking angrily when beaten. It was as though he had bared his soul and exposed its festering ulcers. There was agony in his look and shame. He exclaimed:

"See that woman across the street? Well, she's a street-walker, ain't she? I'd marry her for fifty dollars."

"Don't be a fool!"

"I'm not. I'd marry her for fifty dollars and nobody is going to call me a fool. Gimme fifty dollars, I tell you I'll marry her. Marry a street-walker? Sure I would for fifty dollars!"

"I gave him the fifty," Chet told me. "We crossed the street, he accosted the woman and we all returned to the bar. I slept for an hour or more and I don't know what they talked about. The woman was about thirty-five; her face was haggard; she had the usual voice of such a woman with no accent of suffering in it though I am certain she was the kind that, making a living out of her body, strives desperately to sentimentalize her search for bread and butter.

"When I awakened, a drink soon revived me. The pair were having breakfast. Neither spoke about Jordan's intention on meeting her. They seemed happy and calm. At seven-thirty in the morning, I made to catch my train back home. Jordan would not hear of it."

"No you don't" he said firmly. "You're going to see us married, my boy. You went into this with me and you're going to see it through!"

"We're getting married, dearie," said the woman gazing at Jordan admiringly. "What do you know about that?"

"I knew nothing about it that I cared to express," Chet told me, "except that I felt terribly about it. Later I did my damndest to get Jordan aside and argue him out of it, but that was impossible. So the saloon-keeper and I went to fetch a license with them. I stayed on in Detroit a week. The rest is rather sordid, I'm afraid. Jordan married her, of course; God only knows what possessed him. A few days later he was broke. He tried to make her go back to her business, but she refused. It sounds silly, but I think she loved him. Maybe it was the first time anyone had asked her to marry him, I don't know. They had some terrible quarrels, but she stuck to her refusal to go back to her old life. Eventually she did; yet that was because Jordan left her. They never saw each other again. And that is the story of Jordan Revolver's marriage. No one ever saw him or heard of him after that except about his death."

I did not mention Bozy's story to Chet. I somehow do not believe it was true. I cannot say why. Bozy was a fearful liar. He might have invented the name and circumstances very easily. Or he might have heard me telling the character man the story of Jordan Revolver's earlier misfortunes and used the name for his amusement at my astonishment and for his pleasure in his fiction. With no reasonable proof, I suspect Bozy's story.

"And his death?" I asked Chet.

"That can be told in two words. A friend of his and ours is an interne at Ann Arbor. One day some cadavers came to the clinic for dissection. This interne fellow picked one of them up and turned him face up. It was Jordan Revolver."

I have gone to great pains to tell conscientiously this story of Jordan Revolver. I have made it my earnest study to attempt to do no more than recount exactly how it came to me. I might, as I shall indicate, have infused a color and a warmth into it, for writing is my craft. But here loyalty to the story restrained my eager hand. In his exile from home and the circumstances that caused it, I have credence. His assault of his mother is frankly doubtful. Chet's account of his marriage I consider accurate. In some respects I regret having inserted the testimony of the genial Bozy, because, day by day, I regard it as less likely. I did so because it was related to me under the conditions described.

I would like to have painted Jordan Revolver's picture as a character of fiction. I would have given him a provocative smile, at once wistful and mocking, gentle and bitter. He would have worn it when he spoke to me by the lake, when he married the streetwalker, and it would have been still on his lips when the doctor recognized him. I would have elaborated a last conversation between him and Rosie; I think her attitude and that of her father must have been perfect grist for my mill. The dour uncle cutting Jordan off cried for description. Then there is the wet street in Detroit, the low-hung sullen moon and the woman's gaunt face when Chet spoke and for all I know proposed to her then and there. There would also be his own state of mind to speculate upon, and their brief amour and his brutality and her refusal. The suicide (if it was one) would be an admirable situation. Or perhaps he simply died because there was nothing for him to live for, because he renounced the will to breathe.

The story is exactly this. Jordan Revolver contracted a venereal disease from Rosie; he married a prostitute in Detroit; he was found dead and his cadaver was used for experimental purposes in the clinic at Ann Arbor. The rest is silence.

KATHLEEN TANKERSLEY YOUNG

SIX POEMS

I.

the world turns and is brilliant now:
see, now the narrow streets reel with yellow,
color is everywhere, sun in the streets,
and wind on the waters under the yellow mists.
down narrow paths the leaves blow and blow,
and winds talk in yellow music.
yellow is over the world now,
yellow winds are, and yellow leaves,
and mists on the river whirl golden with winter sunlight.
sunlight is over and under walking people,
is over under and about children crying in the streets,
all is color that twists about those who are walking,
over and under walking people
this sunlight, yellow winds blowing from the river, and blowing.
see now how the little streets are pools of yellow
where the small people go down and leave but a yellow circle.

II.

the moon is almost, but not altogether shining,
and little streets are dark with certain shadows.
beyond sharp corners winds break
and brittle leaves follow and follow.
through mists that fill to the brim
these carefully spaced darknesses
that are now known and spoken of as streets,
winds have a knowing way of falling,
winds have a sweet in no way new
or even altogether arrogant or subtle
manner of weaving moods
from these moments in which the moon is not quite
nor yet in any visible manner shining.

IV.

v.

11

some dark image never wholly dead but sleeping,
and go beyond the first surface
to where darkness is more than a tarnished mirror,
or where maybe we are ever so slightly and beautifully dead.

VI.

since the night when we talked
snow has fallen over all the streets,
and in the alleyways and over trees,
and fences and houses and gardens
have been whitened and buried and hushed,
and all last leaves have gone darkly blind under weight of ice.
streets are white now the snow has fallen
swiftly into the blue air of afternoon.
men have walked here in this snow,
footprints have been deep here,
winds have traced the snow over,
and children have been walking here in this same snow.
since the night when we talked
snow has fallen over all the streets.

HERMAN SPECTOR

POEMS

A WOHHMN

i wann, i wann a wohmmn
whose touch hrts.

no mere alyin en allayin drab.
no cynico-mundane dust,
no haddit befaw . . .
i wann a wite wide wohmmn,
promising maww.

o, sing er softly under me now!
i know the banked caress,
the side-to-side weaving.
her womb is wide,
her flesh is swift with tenderness . . .

reech me in my agony!

tears r no damn good;
but things to eat r good.
a continually eaten wohmmn
with vast hungriness . . .

(on cool days, the streets are bare.
walking; her skirt blows
around firm legs.
the sun glos over er.)

NO DEATHES MATTR

dead me no deaths,
ceasar of sad words.
obscure not the meaning of a lifes collapse
with obscene, vague nobleness.

death is a coldness.
dont get hot about it.
its an end.
dont begin on it.
dead me no deaths,
o sad pseudoteacher.

i eat,
i see,
i am going . . .

a train swallows space thru the tunnel
and at last wins the other end.

i wallow in dark caverns.
i shall come out into light.

YELLOW LAMPS

yellow lamps are manifest, are obvious.
yellow lamps are definite.

they are justso, as it grows night.
oh they are sure.

who gives a damn for dark
and deep, damp mysteries?

not yellow lamps,
sneering through rain,
leering at mist.

not yellow, proud lamps!

PARKER TYLER

SONNET AND POEM

I

one left of memory a running stain
and every day upon the gilded screen
of action comes the swift and gobbling spleen
of memory a dragon and the spain
of lechery is shaken as again
the lovers wince to see the hungry lean
and charmless spectre memory careen
upon the complicated roses

pain
of frosted kisses pain of touching list-
less breasts O cut the canvas swiftly love
upon another weave thy grace a pent
a hardy castle quickly roses kist
upon the wall and timeless rooms indent
with corners dragons can know nothing of

II

Now lying in my bed
my arm upraised
(terse angle of disgust)
I am afraid of an old song
a song old of duty, duty, duty
duty, duty, duty—
of dropped leaf, petal
and of moving stream
of shifting cloud of purest, whitest flake
a song
of duty, duty, duty
of thunder, rain and irritable dust
of years, days, minutes, hours
of duty, duty, duty

and my arm upraised
an angle of disgust upon the bed
I listen
to an old song
Duty
a song old
of duty, duty, duty
I hear an old song
of druid mystery or cabalistic rite
(rain in the night. . .
and gray clouds flying. . .
and burned flowers. . .)

ROBERT CLAIRMONT

AGES TURNED TO DUST

To be unfused:
Forevermore to be abused
By winds:
To be unmade:
To light upon
A billionth thing
A flower:
To rest a time
In a golden ring
Or a clever rhyme:
There is no peace for me: I must
Go on in ages turned to dust.

ELI SIEGEL

TWO POEMS

IT IS JANET'S BLOOD

What shall one say of blood,
Blood that goes through bodies
And shows in the skin?
Blooded people have money,
Blood goes to graves,
Blood is stirred by robins,
Singing some times.
When the body's crushed,
Blood may color streets,
When the body's so,
Blood may color streets,
Color them sweetly.
Blood is noisy
Going through the body.
It is blood that makes
Janet so and so.
Blood is there in Janet,
Janet so and so.
Cry and you'll make blood
Do so and so.
Janet, walking,
Janet's blood coming
To the store with Janet.
Janet covers
Her blood with silk.
Janet covers
Her body with satin.
Janet's blood once
Colored silk a little,
Silk on Janet's body.
Pin came to Janet
And silk was colored red

By Janet's red blood
Moving from Janet.
Knife can do the like.
Tin can do the like.
Jagged tin can do the like.

O, Janet, blooded, walking,
Walking, with her blood,
It it Janet's blood
That's blood, blood, blood.

THAT ARE

This bird flying in the grey of sky,
Reached a church spire, by and by.
Church spire going into grey, rain near.
Rain near, rain near; autumn of the year.
Rat scurries underneath in the church; isn't in a hurry.
Leaves go about the church, all in a flurry.
Man loses hat, walking by the church; goes running after it.
Runs and runs; gets it. Takes off a bit
Of mud got on it. Church spire goes into grey
Of sky. Man goes another way;
So does bird. Church spire goes into grey of sky.
Rain now is falling. This is why
Now leaves are wet; they're brown, red, yellow and wet.
Man is walking somewhere else. Hasn't come yet
To where Miss Elizabeth lives. Wants to see her. Rain falls on him and
wets him. Man doesn't like it and runs a little. Gets tired very soon
though. Thinks of a bright afternoon, with wind, in summer, in Boston
near here.
Man runs near where Miss Sprout lives, when he gets so near Miss Eliza-
beth Sprout sees him. She says, O dear.
When he's in, says, William, you're wet.
So he is; so he is. It was two years ago they met.

Where is the bird now? How is the rat?
How are other things? That
ARE. How are other things?

LOUIS ZUKOFSKY

TWO POEMS

I

No sound. But sun.
Lie under. Overhead
the last peace is perfected.
In a kind of steady weather
graves marl the fallow dead.

II

Millenium of sun—
Beast of the field,—
Kissing the beast upon
both ears—

O who will pluck geranium
With smiles before this ass's face
And tie it to his cranium
To match the ass's grace!

DOUGLAS BROWN

TWO POEMS

NAME AND LEGEND

1. In envy of anonymous obscenities
Offered other princesses
You ordered all their obelisks inscribed
To Cleopatra.
2. Unable to impose upon your wife
You fooled a nation
And in energetic inversion of imagined impotence
You bred sons. Their history: Harvard. Energy. Politics.
3. Van Bibber and a coward in your brain
Each added ounces to the trigger pull
That made you a gigantic symbol,
Cafe hero, forever young and drunken
With rich silk hat and gloves and Evelyn Nesbit
A broken butterfly. Legend piled on legend.

LITTLE GIRL

Bitterly all winter long she fumbled at her breasts
Feeling the tender discs beneath her nipples grow
Each sensibly larger. In flaming shame that flowed
Hotly through all her body she evoked
Her will to be a child. Yet with the spring
She stood thigh deep in a cold eddying pool
Beside a wood from which a brook emerged
Washing and washing as afternoon declined
Toward twilight: and she could not cleanse
Her stubborn body. Weary she stumbled home
Defeated; and so cold. Childhood was over.

OLIVER JENKINS

NIGHTCLUB

The golden dancers
pirouette,
blending in rose
and violet.

The music booms,
fades and halts,
resumes the languor
of a waltz;

while the spotlight catches,
clasps and frees
latticed breasts
and powdered knees.

Synthetic beauty!
(O the sight
of blossom-laden
trees at night!)

Mad world, mad—
rouge your cheeks;
smear paint on all
your heart-breaks.

If the blood is hot
and the bones aching,
what right has a heart
to be breaking?

. . . Why should a heart
or anything
clutter up
an evening?

NORMAN MACLEOD

LOGGIA

The friar sat on the top of the world
where moon shone past pillars
in a toppled sea, the shadows fell
velvety along the lower mesas.
Pueblo chanting came lowthrobbing
evenly like ridgerise
repetitively. Urgently insistent
as blankets lay stolidly impassive
where water jugs bulged curvingly
into outer nearness. Projected to
legendry of Spain, his mind wandered
detached, seeing untoward significance
in silence and the smell of orchard
on a rock three days from Oraibi.
Where breeze flowed, his mind
followed over and beyond protuberance,
hunger informative and pathways clinging
precipitously on native rock.
Black like a moqui's hair, the night
combated greyhair on the desert
creamily and the moon rode on.
In such short intervals speak life and death
hold quaveringly where heart beats
as mindeyes look inward with new inception.
Beating, throbbing temple-pulse to
sensual depth and overflow . . .
Bound, gagged . . . over the edge of cliff
face three hundred feet to stark virginity
of rock, an alien priest
served ritual to Acoma.

JOSEPH VOGEL

RHAPSODY IN AN OFFICE

PRELUDE IN STANDING ROOM ONLY

Yesterday when the boss Kalnitz went out of our cloak office I produced a stick which we use to open windows at the top and putting it behind my back managed to bring it over my head to the front to slide a leg over it almost into my abdomen, draw the stick around my neck and it was behind my back again. Florry said Here let me try that too but her underslip was too tight around her thighs and she was afraid to slip the slip up too high because she is sixteen years young, but Mimi Morrison not wearing underthings to speak of struggled around over and about the stick without showing more than a dimple on her belly. Today what with not being athletes Florry's muscle ached under the wishbone and Mimi quivered with charlie horse of the conscience, I alone exempt except for a wish to attend a burlesque show on Houston street which was not raided yet for three months straight.

DON'T BELIEVE THE PRINCESS

Yesterday when the boss Kalnitz said to Florry Take down every telephone message I'll be right back by five by the clock, Florry cast an evil eye on Miss Romonoff putting on her glove. Why does Miss Romonoff always leave the office shortly after the boss and why does she enter the office shortly after the boss you can't fool Florry. Listen Mimi if Miss Romonoff thinks I'll swallow that line about her being a niece of the dead Czar then I'll swallow any hot line if she isn't a peasant and only that mind you then my grandfather is in heaven tuning snakes' ankles, you know, Mimi. Mimi's eyes step out into the main office and come back with the assurance of safety Listen to me Florry did you see the letter I found it was sent to Miss Romonoff and a soldier wrote it OH! he said when are you coming back dear sweetheart and warm the bedding and he also said SH-H-H-H-H so that a blush spread over Florry's cheeks because as you know she is sixteen. If the boss's wife only knew. There's the telephone buzzing Florry don't forget to take down a message and always ask for the name. Gosh I hate this job.

STEAL THE UNDERWEAR FROM UNDER YOUR SHIRT

What's the trouble in this office anyway? Last night Max Sherman called a meeting while the boss sat in the next office red as a beet and listened to find out what the office force had against Miss Romonoff. Mimi said She can't go around bossing everybody just because the boss favors her and it doesn't look nice when that woman goes into his office and he shuts the door and I don't like her that's all. Well well said Max Sherman no trivial prejudices I mean personal prejudices in this discussion er you see I'm not trying to defend her I want the fundamental truth er cause of the trouble see? Now look here said Big Brandt I've wuyked in otheh offices before this one and I ain't never seen such officiousness I'm as good as anybody I'm an American that's what I am and I believe that the next man is as good as me see and I just ain't going to stand to her telling me what to do around here get that? I see said Max Sherman er of course I'm going to take charge of that part of the matter and hereafter what I say goes in this office—can you beat that whispers Florry in Mimi's hot ear, the big simp is trying to make himself the boss I'll quit before I take any orders from him—quiet please if you have anything to say I wish you would tell it to all of us, that's what we're here for. Come in, Mr. Vogel, have a seat. Now I'd like to put in my bit I say, Mr. Sherman the truth is and that's what you want to hear I suppose, that's what you called the meeting for, I'm not a public speaker but I know what the truth is and that's what's counts, the truth is that Miss Romonoff isn't to be blamed, I'm used to going down to the cause of causes and find that the one who is to blame is the boss, he caused this spirit of suspicion which exists here and since we can't change the boss's character my suggestion is that you call off this meeting because nothing will be accomplished. Ha ha ha he wants to change the boss's character, if you don't like the boss, Mr. Vogel, the only thing for you to do is to quit. I get hot around the collar and say Now what is the purpose of this meeting? Do you want the truth or are you trying to sugar up conditions here? I say—haha get another job get another job. All right, go to hell, the whole bunch of you. That horse thief Max Sherman can't fool me, I know he's trying to get in good with the Boss Kalnitz because the boss likes Miss Romonoff he's also trying to get in good with the Princess, a man like that would steal the underwear from under your shirt and pat you on the back.

WHERE'S YOUR GUTS?

Last night it was decided that when you come into the office in the morning you got to say Good Morning and when you leave in the evening you got to say Good Night, so after the meeting everybody said Good Night and left except Sherman Mimi Myself and Kalnitz because we are the heads of departments and Kalnitz of course is the head of the whole works including the Princess, who said Miss Romonoff is a princess? Then the four of us got together to give a report of the meeting and Max Sherman tried to sugar the protests but the boss did not know that Sherman is a sugar baby I mean a man who'll rob the last ruble from an immigrant and then the boss said There are certain people in this office who don't speak to me with respect . . . now just a minute I said, First of all you got to stop telling DeVorkin to spy on everybody, Florry to spy on DeVorkin, Miss Romonoff to spy on me, and by the way you got to tell Miss Romonoff to stop running into your office every time she hears a word, even thieves are ashamed to be called spies and it is my opinion that you are making this office into a spy training headquarters. Boss Kalnitz he flew right up and said I never did nothing of the kind and I challenge you to prove what you said, as to Miss Romonoff coming in here and shutting the door well she is doing some confidential work for me and it uh I mean she is doing outside work and we have to keep it secret as yet, pretty soon you'll all know about the venture and believe me you'll profit from it. Mimi shot out finally, couldn't hold it in anymore Now what do you mean by telling us that someone here doesn't speak to you with respect, I know and we know that you are referring to me, I want to tell you now that I can never respect you because you haven't got any guts, why don't you come right out and say Miss Morrison doesn't speak to me respectfully, then you'd be saying something, that's the trouble with you and everybody like you, you haven't got any guts to speak of and I hate that way of talking indirectly. The boss gets hot around the neck and Max Sherman pipes in with Now now now Miss Morrison start right in now being respectful to Mr. Kalnitz. Miss Morrison is right I say, we would respect the boss more if he was more like a boss and if he doesn't like what we do why don't he come right out and say so and even threaten to give us a kick in the, well, in the trousers.

INTERMEZZO IN DEVORKIN

This morning I walked into the boss's office and said Well here I am

and I'm starting right in to cooperate, now in regard to your writing the editorial for the pamphlet that's all right but don't you think you can leave out the phrase *tonsilar activity*? The boss hesitates, gets reddish and declares I don't see why I can't use the words *tonsilar activity*, you see the cloak industry thinks I'm a greenhorn and I want to show them I can write literary-like you know what I mean, what's the matter with *tonsilar activity*? I say What you want to convey is that you were unable to speak at the meeting, why don't you say that instead of writing *my journalistic instinct drowned out all tonsilar activity*. The boss takes on a pensive and petty look and says Well let it go for a while I'll decide later there's lots of time but I don't see why *tonsilar activity* isn't all right, when I was young I used to write all the time my wife has packed away in a trunk a load of plays, stories, poems and sketches which I wrote before I got married, all right, let it go for a while. All right I answer, but I'm telling you frankly what I think about it. The boss went away and came back two hours later and I brought up the question again, he said Wait I'll speak about it to Miss Romonoff. He shut himself in with the Princess and after two minutes called me back and said All right, take it out. Florry called me behind the wash screen and whispered You damn fool the whole office was calling each other tonsilar activity and DeVorkin squealed to the Princess and naturally the Princess my eye squealed to the boss and told him that everybody here was singing and shouting Oh I Got Those Tonsilar Activity Blues, You Can't Tonsilar Activity Around Me, Cut Out the Tonsilar Activity Will You, I'll Die Before I Share My Dear Little Tonsilar Activity With You, and naturally Miss Romonoff didn't know what it was all about until the boss showed her the words of his editorial then she got wise and spilled the dirt, now watch out for DeVorkin he's a spy too. Gee Whiz is everybody around here except me a spy?

A DOSE OF CATEGORICAL IMPERATIVE

Mimi always used to hate me because I once told the boss to fire her but now we are good friends because it don't pay not to be good friends in a hostile camp, so Mimi comes into my office when the boss steps out and tells me that last night she had a hot party with a big Swede and my oh my she showed me the bruises on her ankles and how you can't get decent silk stockings no more the teeth shows right through them, well as soon as Mimi sees the boss come in she beats it but the boss calls her into his office and says hot words What were you talking about to Mr. Vogel? Mimi she don't know what to think for a couple of moments

then her Irish blood leaps to the rescue and she says Of all the nerve is it any of your business what I was talking about to Mr. Vogel say who do you think you are anyway do I have to tell you what I say to everybody in this office Christ did you ever hear the likes of it? Now now Miss Morrison you used to be on the outs with Mr. Vogel so why all the friendship all of a sudden? None of your damned business I'll talk to whoever I please and just try to find out what I'm talking about get your spies to work, guts oh my is that what you call guts? Mimi walks proudly out and goes to her own desk and the boss feels like firing her on the spot but he hasn't got the nerve because he once offered Mimi a room in a hotel all expenses paid and he's afraid she'll squeal and spill the whole works to his wife and naturally the boss is scared as hell of his wife.

I'M TELLING YOU A SECRET

which isn't a secret at all because all you have to do is talk to the boss and you'll hear him say the funniest words you ever heard in your life it's awful hard to understand him over the telephone because when he wants to say passion he says *passen* and instead of chicken he says *tsiken* and for Mitchel he says *Mitsel* and for fish he tells you *fiss* or Why don't you take a *subscripsin wits* is what we want, oh it's the funniest thing you ever heard and what makes it funny is that he thinks he is a literary man and wants to write the editorials for the firm's Cloak Broad-side but everybody knows that his wife and daughter write the editorials and of course even then I have an awful time revising them but don't tell anybody anyhow.

FINALE IN LOSING A ROTTEN JOB

What is conscience when you haven't got any but the truth is that if the boss ever sees this he'll give me an awful kick and say You may have a year's contract with me but you ain't going to ruin and break up my family and what with calling Florry a thick head which I do now and speaking about the dimple on Mimi's belly I'd be in a helluva fix in addition to giving away the boss's *affaire de lit* with Miss Romonoff so if his wife finds out she'll come down to the office and tear out every hair in the Princess's head and twirl the boss around her fingers Boss me eye I'm the boss in this family God Oh God if only his wife wrecked the place that's why I haven't got any conscience and it's a rotten job anyway.

NOTES

JACQUES LE CLERCQ was born in Carlsbad, formerly Austria, now The Czechoslovakian Republic, in 1898. His work has appeared in The American Mercury, Transition and in other magazines. His book of short stories, Show Cases, was recently published by Macy-Masius. He has studied at various universities in this country and abroad and is at present an instructor at Columbia University.

KATHLEEN TANKERSLEY YOUNG has contributed to The Southwest Review, Japm, Contemporary Verse, Palo Verde, The Forge, Free Verse and other magazines, including The Echo, to which she was formerly contributing editor. She lives in New York City.

HERMAN SPECTOR was born in New York City in 1905. His work has appeared in New Masses, Free Verse, The Exile, Bozart, and in The Second American Caravan. He is contributing editor to Palo Verde.

PARKER TYLER, who is twenty-one years old, was born in New Orleans and now lives in New York City. His verse and critical essays have been in The Bookman, Voices, The Saturday Review of Literature, Japm, Contemporary Verse and other periodicals.

ROBERT CLAIRMONT was born in Chicago in 1902. He attended the University of Pittsburgh and Columbia University, and now lives in New York City. His verse has appeared in The New Yorker, Free Verse, Contemporary Verse and other magazines. His book of poems, Quintillions, was recently issued by The Dial Press.

ELI SIEGEL is twenty-six years old and was born in Russia. He has contributed to Free Verse and other magazines, and won the Nation Poetry Prize in 1925 with his Hot Afternoons Have Been in Montana. His home is in New York City.

LOUIS ZUKOFSKY was born in 1904 in New York City, his present home. His poetry has appeared in The Exile, The Dial and in other magazines.

DOUGLAS BROWN is one of a group of poets and artists living in the French Quarter of New Orleans.

OLIVER JENKINS was born in Boston, Mass., in 1901 and now lives in Concord, N. H. He studied at Harvard and several other higher schools. His work has appeared in Poetry, The New Yorker, Japm, Contemporary Verse, The American Mercury, Free Verse, and in other magazines. His most recent book is Heavenly Bodies, a volume of poems published by Pascal Covici.

NORMAN MACLEOD is editor of Palo Verde at Holbrook, Arizona. He has contributed to Contemporary Verse and The Echo and has been appearing recently in New Masses.

JOSEPH VOGEL was born in 1904 in New York City where he now lives. His work has appeared in several periodicals including This Quarter, New Masses and The Second American Caravan.

EZRA POUND

PROGRAM 1929

1. Government for utility only.
2. Article 211 of the penal code to be amended by the 12 words:

**THIS STATUTE DOES NOT APPLY TO
WORKS OF LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC MERIT.**

3. Vestal's bill or some other decent and civilized copyright act to be passed.

Foot-note: Instead of EVERYBODY'S going to New York ten or a dozen bright young lads ought to look in on the national capital. We need several novels in the vein of Hemingway's *The Torrents of Spring* dealing not with helpless rural morons but with "our rulers" and the "representatives of the people."

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

FOR A NEW MAGAZINE

Blues is a good name for it, all the extant magazines in America being thoroughly, totally, completely dead as far as anything new in literature among us is concerned. Anything that fractures the stereotyped is definitely taboo, now as always. In the common mind America is just recovering from the post-war hysterias of a few of the more bizzare writers of that unsettled time, returning to the normal paths of good literary practice. In short to dullness, to stupidity, to regimentation, to business. Blues comes as near to stating the implied revolt from this as one could get to entitle a pushing, new venture.

For this is and should be the machine of young women and men, no matter who may back them by advice and other support among my generation. The literary advances that we have made can be lost quite easily through the fact that we never did get our work fully before the eye of those interested, and still cannot do so; through the great preponderance of interests unliterary in the United States; and the pure comicality of everything unsteady and uncertain among us, especially everything a little vulgar and so accurate—making soft pickings for the funny guys. We're more afraid of ridicule today than a boy would be entering High School. Why? It's the weapon of those who won't venture, who are afraid of losing their jobs, whose sense of what literature should be has rotted and dried up and blown out of their heads as dust.

But the young writers today must not be allowed to lose what those of 1914 and thereabouts won—even to be held as weakly as it is—with difficulty. That would be the part I'd like to play now—and to keep on playing, to drive that home. It makes me sick to see kids playing around with trite forms, trite rhythms, trite images; prettifying the page, filling books with perfect sonnets, perfect drawings, dainty bits of blah which if they had read anything at all that has been done even in the last ten years they'd know they were reverting to the stalest of stale precedents. Read even what Mark Van Doren has to say in *Palms*. Maybe it's all right to practice by "copying the masterpieces in the galleries"—with a difference, howbeit. But for God's sake look for a moment out of your own medium if you will and notice the things that happened to French painting since Ingre or Manet and then draw a conclusion. It isn't poetry to be neat, to indite smooth lines to "Helen" or to "The State of Utah." Poetry is to know—first of all what is trite, what is even more than that, banal.

At least inversions of the sentence seem finished. At least "poetic" diction should not be tolerated. We have at least learned to speak plainly in verse. At least one can say clearly what he means without necklaces of adjectives to half us with their "nuances." Lofty thoughts certainly ought to be finished now as material for a poem. Interpret that as you may. At least we know that a poem is a mechanism that has a function which is to say something as accurately and as clearly as possible, but that while we are even in the act of creating it, the words (the parts) are getting old and out of date just as would be the corresponding parts of a motor car. Literature, poetry especially, is to invent. It is not to invent emotions, though there may be a few that were missed formerly. But it is to invent mechanisms of expression suitable to the keenest intelligence of the time who, struggling with emotion, finds the mechanisms formerly adequate to ensnare or vent them inadequate.

This mechanism is a necessity to any time. Success with poetic inventions makes the time articulate in its highest potentialities. This is of course funny as hell. So is ignorance. Poetry is thus everything that a man of the greatest power could wish to encompass. It is a forceful, intensely serious occupation. Serious to be interpreted say as might be Chaplin's studies to amuse or as anything that engages all the force in a man. Poetry especially is just at the brink of its modern development when it will with absolute certainty supplant a great part of the effectiveness now absorbed by science and to a less apparent extent by philosophy.

But no matter about that. The important thing is that a new magazine must be broadly open to experiment—some of which will be futile. It can't bother to print stuff salable in the usual market. That's all dead and even if it isn't—what of it? It's to make something new, something that will make the dumbness of our environment articulate, by its words, by its form, by the release it gives to the insulted intelligence of people badgered by assinine lobbys, newspapers which cannot rise above the phobias of its editors and employees. News of murders which if they were directed with anything but the crassest sense of proportion, the least lift from stupidity—might possibly stimulate us to something intelligent, but as it is sink us only the deeper in vulgarity and dullness. Something to enliven our lives by its invention, some breadth of understanding, some lightness of touch that would seem authentic to an individual and was not originated in the lumbar region of the spinal chord—to the falling of flower petal or other putridity. Some frank vulgarity even would be relief enough. This is what poetry might be. It is cramped now in diction, in a sight of the world, in everything that might be useful to us as free

citizens of about the most helpless mass of human beings as ever cluttered up and spoiled a decent piece of country.

A new magazine might too open up a path for the appearance of work by Americans in Europe and elsewhere where their observations, their serious observations of other countries and peoples might be laid before us for decent study. This is simply not a function of ordinary "interested" magazines. They may pretend so but it is not. Everything is edited damned closely. But unedited observations by clear living individuals simply cannot get published here. This is a cold fact, proven daily.

To hell also, to begin with, with "an audience." It sounds like the hope of heaven we were brought up on. Is it necessary to have an audience before one uses his plain senses? If one compose well it will be, a hundred to one, in spite of every audience that can be imagined. This very thing has made chop meat of everything we, as Americans, intend.

Take a good look at a few things besides the Rocky Mountains, and your girl's eyes and read Henry Adams' Education and his Mt. Saint Michel and Chartres. Read about everything that Ezra Pound has written, no need to agree with him—but read him anyway. There ought to be a place in any new magazine of considerable size in America to reprint the best poems written by Americans during the past twenty years, the unusual and more radical work especially, poems by Mina Lloyd, the shorter works of Djuna Barnes, something of Robert McAlmon's, the first of Hemingway's short stories. It is salutary to notice that T. S. Eliot has turned definitely Anglo-Catholic. Look into his poems and see why. This might be class room stuff but it has, anyway, to do with writing—which hardly anything but the hardest headed thinking and seeing has to do with about us elsewhere.

JOSEPH VOGEL

MILK PITCHER

A Study in Feverish Tragedy

"Mrs. Klar, never mind the meeting, the meeting now, never mind, oh, your pretty vases, vases, your Chinese vases and the dragons, oh, the dragons, they match the dragons on your China dishes, oh, they do, mind you, they do," so said Mrs. Jonto.

"Do they?" asked Mrs. Klar.

"They do, they do, oh, they do, never mind the meeting," said Mrs. Jonto.

"And how's your Emily?" asked Mrs. Klar.

"My Emily, Emily where are you, Emily come here, here at once, let us see you, let Mrs. Klar see you, oh do," said Mrs. Jonto.

"Emily, what a fine, well-fed girl you've grown to be," remarked Mrs. Klar.

"The meeting, the meeting, oh, the meeting, business, let's get business over, please now please Mrs. Klar, please now please, the meeting, did you ever!" cried Mrs. Clandest. And, "The meeting, let's over with the meeting, did you ever!" cried Mrs. Meer. And, "But, but, please now please, did you ever, did you?" cried Mrs. Citrin. And, "Let's get done with the business at hand," said Maiden Jeena.

"Girls sit down, hoho, sit down, lookat the eaties, hohoho, ohohoh, sweeties, sweeties, sweeties, come here Emily have some sweeties never mind the meeting girls sit down," so said Mrs. Jonto.

"Digestion bad," from Mrs. Meer.

"Teeth ache," from Mrs. Citrin.

"Pimples too much," from Mrs. Clandest.

"Have sweeties Emily," from Mrs. Jonto.

"Now, the meeting; ORDER!" from Mrs. Klar.

"That's right," from Maiden Jeena.

"Now Emily, Emily, a poem, recite your little little poem," a suggestion from Mrs. Jonto.

"There was once a girl,

"Who couldn't find a fellah,

"There was once a girl,

"Who was too partic'lar,

"Oh-ho, yes I know,

"No I don't,

"A girl was too partic'lar.

"She wouldn't have no fellah,

"She was too partic'lar,

"And no fellah would have 'er,

"Cause she was too good lookin',

"Maybe so 'n maybe not,

"She thought she was good lookin',

"'N what was left of her,

"I know 'n maybe not,

"AN OLD MAID," sang Emily.

"Oh, ohohohohohoh, oooooo!" issued worryment from married mouths.

"Oooooooo! Emily, you musn't!"

Maiden Jeena did not care. Umph!

"First thing to consider at this meeting, members of *Mothers' Society*, is benefits. Listen, benefits."

"Umph!" from Maiden Jeena.

"Ma, oh, ma, tell me, please, my ma, what is Jeena mother of in *Mothers' Society*?"

"Oh-oh-oh, ul, ul, ul, ush, ush, sh-h-h-h-h, you bad Emily!" reddened Mrs. Jonto. "Here's a sweetie candy for ye dearie Emily."

"What a child!" a cackle from Maiden Jeena.

"There was once a girl,

"Who couldn't find a fellah,

"There was once a"

"Heavens me! What does the brat want? Mrs. Jonto, what manner of child sprung from your bosom?" from Maiden Jeena.

"Oh!" from Mrs. Citrin.

"Lord!" from Mrs. Meer.

"Crush me!" from Mrs. Clandest.

"Child, oh dear, what of my child does she want, want, want of my child?" cried Mrs. Jonto. "Here for ye is a sweetie," to Emily.

"Bad child," a grunt from Maiden Jeena.

"Meeting! Order!" two words from Mrs. Klar.

"Meeting, Pish!" so said Mrs. Jonto. "Jeena ain't calling my Emily bad, she ain't, ain't she?"

"You don't know how to raise children, that's your trouble," dared Maiden Jeena.

"Ay, 'n aye, 'n no, maybe so, 'n how do you know?"

"Heavens! Meeting! Order!" three exclamations from Mrs. Klar.

"You're ruinin' the brats mind with sweets," so double-dared Maiden Jeena.

"Ugh! 'N what, 'n therefore, 'n be careful, you you . . ."

"Oh!" from Mrs. Citrin.

"The proposition before us this evening is Resolved that no appurtenances pertaining inclusively . . ."

"Bad child," mumbled Maiden Jeena.

"There was once a girl,

"Who was too partic'lar,

"Ha 'n ha, haha!" sang Emily.

"Gutty kid. Close your mug," a growl from Maiden Jeena.

"What'll she have from the kid? What'll she, tell me, careful be, be careful," so warned Mrs. Jonto.

". . . resolved that appurtenances conclusively pertaining lord I'm confusived," from Mrs. Klar, chairlady of *Mothers' Society*.

"Gimme that candy bowl!" a command from Maiden Jeena.

"Jealous, ain't yer?" from kid Emily.

"Gimme that candy bowl, ye gut!"

"Crush me!" from Mrs. Clandest.

"Emily, Jeena's bad, wicked, have some milk, wash down candy, no, eh, darling Emily?" so said Mrs. Jonto.

"Gimme that milk pitcher!" a command from Maiden Jeena.

"What'll it be next?" asked Mrs. Jonto.

"Ye gut!" from Maiden Jeena.

"Ach'l, ach'l, ugh, ugh," so tried to say Mrs. Jonto.

"Lord!" from Mrs. Meer.

"Milk pitcher, milk pitcher, glass of milk, here's a glass of milk ye old maid," so flared Mrs. Jonto.

EXTRA

MRS. JONTO THROWS GLASS OF MILK INTO MAIDEN JEENA'S LAP

"Wul wul aye aye aye," streamed tears from Maiden Jeena. "Me new dress ruined. Gimme that pitcher milk, yuh bum gut!"

"Meeting called to order," from Mrs. Klar, chairlady of *Mothers' Society*.

"Look look look!" from Maiden Jeena.

ATTENTION! DOCTORS OF USA
MRS. JONTO HOLDS PITCHER AT SPOUT

"Crush me, disease!" from Mrs. Clandest.

"You 'n yuh kid ain't got no bringing up," so dared Maiden Jeena.

"A girl was too partic'lar,

"She wouldn't have no fellah,

"Ha, 'n ha, heehee!" sang Emily.

"Oh, mercy me!" from Mrs. Klar, chairlady of *Mothers' Society*.

"Oh, hell!" from Mrs. Jonto.

"Resolution I make should meeting now be dissolved, crush us!" from Mrs. Clandest.

"M sorry," from Mrs. Jonto.

"So yer orter be," from Maiden Jeena.

"M sorry twice," from Mrs. Jonto.

"Ll forgive you fer once," from Maiden Jeena.

"M going to spank Emily," from Mrs. Jonto.

"N no yer ain't," from Maiden Jeena.

"M so!" from Mrs. Jonto.

"Ba ba uh uh uch," tears from Emily.

"N now ye did it," from Maiden Jeena.

"Meeting dissolutioned," from Mrs. Klar. "Oh, I got headache, all confusived, no more meeting, not tonight . . ."

"Git yer wraps girls, Mrs. Klar is confusioned, Lord!" from Mrs. Meer.

"Ll give you a penny," dared Maiden Jeena.

"N ye won't," from Mrs. Jonto. "It's better I breed my children than that."

"N here's two pennies," double-dared Maiden Jeena.

"N take 'em I will," said kid Emily.

"All right, right all right, git bad habits," from Mrs. Jonto.

"Goodbye Mrs. Klar," from Mrs. Meer. And, "Goodbye, dear," from Mrs. Jonto. And, "Goodbye, chairlady our'n," from Mrs. Citrin. And, "Goodbye don't mind us," from Mrs. Clandest. And, "Goodnight!" from Maiden Jeena.

"Never again," from Mrs. Klar, chairlady *Mothers' Society*, silently.

"All because of that milk pitcher. Ninety-nine cents dress anyhow. Hope two glasses of milk spilled on her lap, that damned Jeena, ain't got no

business belongin' to mothers' society nohow. Damn that milk pitcher no how, goddam. Oh, OHOHOHOH . . ."

DISCOVERY
MRS. KLAR RUNS TO DOOR

"Girls, girls, oh, girls, stop look listen, girls, oh, girls . . ."

"Lord what now?" from Mrs. Meer on street.

"What happened, what happened, God what happened?" from Mrs. Jonto on street.

"Oh, girls, girls, girls, 't wasn't milk pitcher . . uh . . uh . . at all, at all . . uh . . uh . . 'twas the water pitcher, oh, oh, that's all girls, goonight . . ."

MRS. KLAR FAINTS IN THE ARMS OF A HATRACK

CHARLES HENRI FORD

GROUP

OPTIONAL

foreword

persimmons are on the trees on the quaggy ground too but do not eat
one that isn't soft for it will pucker your mouth but anyway you are
beautiful whether your mouth is puckered or not

poem

o maleness o lovers or animals kisses oh bitter (as orangepeel) and seekers
of forests o brass and footprints

i run with slow steps and am aroused from a narcosis of squalor

my hands are warmed on icy foreheads and my thighs made cold with
consecrate lusts

ochrefaced men move into a numbness

why am i hostile to the keepers of gardens and the keepers of cities
an existence is nullified in the omega of a cracked hickorynut

let only a tree be your lover

take only sand for a marriagebed

use sun for raiment and rain for a sacrament

rain rages on the riversurface

rain pursues a vagrancy and is an impetus for death by drowning

ELEGY

when the layers of smoke have faded into a staleness brick walls are
maudlin and four o'clock is once more in travail

a car overturns with a scream of brakes and a scream of fear and i catch
my breath which is sour with bootleg

o cankerous complexity of a city morning and four a m
men pull into a coldness and sparrows like dead leaves are agitated by
a sullen wind
clothes stuffed with flesh and blood begin to move along the sidewalks
whistles at six a m sob a threnody for broken bones

TO BE PICKLED IN ALCOHOL

I

if brains pickled in alcohol prove anything don't say sweetly *it may be*
burtn you but it's killin me
words said sweetly said even nicely are not an antitoxin

here is a tic for your nose and cheek and a paperhat to be gay with
o fingers and the twitching of a head
you will know the glued standing and see many locomotives rush to a
destruction

II

i rumble on the narrow streets and find an expiation for this chaos
he said *it's red like that all over looking* and i choked a cigarette butt
looking in my glass i am sure that i resemble a traffic squall or a sudden
snow
a promise has been too insistent and i mold stickily bread into a hanging
if a watch ticks shatter your unrest against abnormality

who has said a gray day now is a penitent

i hold tightly to an ivy wreath and a shudder
with torn nails i build grandly the last madhouse for a burned dream

WARREN TAYLOR

THE SOUTH IN THE BUILDING OF THE NATION

2

Can anyone tell me who has seen
Either the bean-pod or the bean?

1

Your grandfather planted the celestial fallow.

2

Could he have been so callow?

1

Your uncle Joseph Rook had no beans to sell.
He could not sell them well.

He ground elixir from a brittle rose.
The musk impinged his nose.

Joseph rowed down the Chattahoochee.
Amaryllis fled from Minneapolis.

2

Did she appropriate a green bean?

1

Your dear old uncle saw one on her bonnet.

Amaryllis advanced to Kankakee.
He beheld it in her eye.

She saw dead fish in the Chattahoochee.
He plucked the bean from the mote.

"Now I see better," Amaryllis said.
"I am your debtor," Joseph replied.

2

Love Truth. Cherish Glory.
That is only a bedtime story.

I

Joseph Rook had beans to sell.
He sold them well.
He said he would give bean-pods to his neighbors.

"Give me a bean-pod, Mister Joseph," a neighbor said.
He gave him a bean-pod. He asserted:

"If it falls among the stones,
Conjure it with newts' bones."

Joseph never saw his neighbors again.

Amaryllis fled from Minneapolis Indianapolis.
Where did Joseph come from, Amaryllis?
Minneapolis Indianapolis.
Gather moss from Indianapolis;
Ravish mint in Minneapolis.
Minneapolis Indianapolis.

"Thank you, Mister Joseph," the neighbors said,
"Thank you, Mister Joseph; you ain't atall dead.
We love our Uncle Joseph.
We love him in the clover.
We love him in the corn.
We love him in the clover corn golden morn newly born
in the clover corn.
We know Aunt Amaryllis.

We adore Aunt Amaryllis.
We do not admire her in the parlor.
We love her in the clover.
We have seen her in the corn."

2

So old Joe has seen the bean?

1

Leaves entwined him more fiercely than the Chattahoochee.
He forgot ten million fish to eat green beans.
Indianapolis rhymes with clover bean rover mother.

2

I do not know what you mean.

1

So old Joe has seen the bean.

Have you seen dollars in a bushel?

Remember the green in the bean and Joseph Rook has beans to sell.
He sells them well.
He takes them home in his pockets to plant seed corn by the bushel.
He knows seed corn.
It is round and mellow yellow.
There are tender shoots in the tender ground and the corn shoots in the
seed coil and the green corn grows.
Joseph knows soil corn and loves green beans.

Amaryllis, come home, come home, come home. Amaryllis.
Joseph Rook knows seed corn and loves green beans.

LOUIS ZUKOFSKY

THREE POEMS

I

Across the smoke, over all past living,
I drink tonight, I am yours again, am one;
Across this table where you drink to everyone
But me, five candles overrun.

You have left me alone to myself, a sixth
Candle overrunning, you have singled me out
Alone, have made me yours, not one along with
the others, and my flame leaps,
Rouses bright in the fond darkness folding it
about.

II

'And the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders
Cease
Because they are few,
And those that look out of the windows be darkened.'

Hear it?
The old burden,—forget it, you're not to bow.
Darkened windows—

Haven't we laughed,
You alone, I alone, walking, smoking, together,
Spurning what was putrid?

Know.
Like the budding of fruit in your garden,
Home, when the time comes for the budding of fruit—
For you, too, a time!

III

And about these lights, they are the lights
 Within the waters, liquid, springing up in me;
 And about these waters that are me
 They flow to shore, again, again, flow back
 In the blue night, and from the leaves in autumn rollick,
 Voyaging; I, too, go voyaging.

And about these inn-walls under trees, reflections
 Of their gables, frame and windowed lights within the waters,
 They are the lit deck of the world-whip gleaming,
 Illumined, in the night, the cut waves leaping to the deck.
 Yea, and about these trees their barks goosefooting
 At the base, on each little rise of earth above the waters;
 About the clouds swayed over them—the trees, hoarse,
 Straining; about the leaves falling through them,
 upon me, upon the waters;—
 They are one by one the tall masts and the smoke-tops
 and the blown free birds of the world-ship,
 Lifting, tree-populated, mist-swollen, skimming on the heavens.

And about this me of writhing nerve,
 I have said I would not rack the brain to make it clear,
 I have said the heart should shrivel being nerve,
 And eyes and face die a cat's that wrinkles
 Green and gray, tortured, dreading touch;
 But not the brain's racked, but racks the body;

The heart
 Clockwork happy working in the dark;

About this brain that racks this me,
 The fine skull shelters it—the brain, controlling,
 Balancing the feet to stand,—the lights brimming under,
 The harbor air over, two trees two extended hands touching them.

E. Rockway, L. I.

WITTER BYNNER

GOTHAM

Our host was a dish of marble fruit,
Every colour and curve arranged to seem real
And every blemish.
His cheek was as curved as the painted peach,
His fingers were as dead as the white grapes,
His eyes as the blue grapes.

And there were professors
Around the whiteness of the sepulchral table
Plucking at the weight under which they were buried
And never knowing
That the motion of their fingers
Was caused by earth-worms.

So I hurried away from them to Harlem
And danced at a cabaret till dawn
And saw dark bodies
Waving for poise
Like wings on a dark twig
And hugged to my heart cymbals and drums
And rose up to the long yowl of saxophones.

What was that whimpering,
Funny little whimpering,
Underneath a taxicab?
Someone had a baby,
Someone had a baby.
People in the taxicab,
Gentleman and lady,
Never knew that, underneath,
Someone had a baby.

A black woman, looming,
Solicited me

With a voice like the larger wires of a harp
 And I answered, "Hell, no!"
 With a voice like a bang on a banjo.

What was it on the car-rail?
 Was it a cat in the blue dawn,
 Or a creeping newspaper?

Was it I, this blurred person
 Weaving down a long blankness of stone
 In spite of the blue dawn
 To a sheer blankness of stone,
 I who used to sit long ago on a fence-rail
 And live with apple-blossoms?

Have you neared heaven, as I have
 In the azure body of a bird?
 Have you muzzled mud with a turtle,
 As I have?
 Then bind your lonely side to mine.
 For heaven was a blue mist, but has fallen,
 And is dust now, black with tears.

I am wanting something.
 What am I worming after, away from the skies?
 Ah, to lie down and be a cocoon again,
 Conceiving wings again!

ELI SIEGEL

FAIR ELLEN, FAIR STARS

When the evening, later,
Had Ellen no more,
Ellen drowned in the river
Going down coldly,
It was an evening with stars
Lightly shining in black,
Such as Ellen saw once
From doorsteps, from windows,
From fast-going trams.
And Ellen in the river
Had the stars above her
Unminding whether
They were seen or not,
And Ellen was unminding
Whether she saw evening stars
Or whether she did not.
And as her body whirled about
In the dark, fast river,
Starlight was caught in the water,
Starlight was taken along by the water;
The light of the stars
Was whirled about by the river
Which had the light of these stars.
Here was Ellen's body and starlight
In a way they hadn't been before.
Once, Ellen on a doorstep,
Had the light of stars so and so.
Fair Ellen, fair stars,
You are now all new.
Never, ever before,
Were you so.
Ellen in the river,
Stars in the river,
And the river cold and fast,
Taking them both.

Fair Ellen, fair stars,
How well you are.
'Cause the river never
Had you so before.

ROBERT CLAIRMONT

IX

Mornings: bright, the sun rising; the clouds, bright, piled up; the river, bright; the ferryboats, bright; the towers of Manhattan, bright and good to see.

Sunday mornings: clear, July; the sun above the house-tops; the river, goldenbright; the ferryboats, dreary, slow; the towers of Manhattan, lovely, blazing in the morning's light.

Dull Octobers: the evenings: the sun, dull, the sun, half-gone; the river, goldendull; the ferryboats, sad and goldendull; the towers of Manhattan, shadows, the shadows go.

Nights in summer: the sky, blue; the moon, full, round (a millionth time) the moon, silver; the ferryboats, jewels; the towers of Manhattan, faery towers.

Dawns, sunsets, half-moons, winters, springs, Octobers, ferryboats and rivers: jewels, summers, sparklings, glitters, stars, twinkles, twinklings, towers and vertical snows and rains: the towers of Manhattan, proud, the evening going: the evening goes.

PARKER TYLER

NEVER SAY YES TO THE SPROUTING (THREE POEMS)

THIS DREAMING IMAGE

Clean come to me
From both poles of the earth
This dreaming image, in
Or out the subway to be hung
Upon a strap, and five p. m.
To draw into itself. . .
This waking eyelash
To be sobbed into the sunshine
Muttered in the death of knowing
The ways of circulating dust
Are limited to one.

Fair over earth shall hang
This postulate, trapped in the air
Where sungilt stars
Are racing to approve
Of buds. Fair shall this be hung
To fall with goodbyes,
Blowing down the street with one, bound
To a China lost from sight
With sun of will upcoming in four hours
But peeling its own limbo from the minute
To hide among the lampposts.

Never to shape the budding hour of it
Or wishing it to shape
Is to turn crook to get a number
Chase upstairs to open a treacherous door
Inviting in a simile of lust
To tongue into the concrete.

With the eye upon the postulate

Fair shall it hang;
 Slaughterer of tears and distances;
 Keeper of the hothouse heart;
 So never shall the moment
 Be a heartbeat finished for the stop
 Or lingering, for between the poles
 There is a magnetism to ensure
 The head bent down, the legs sent up.

SONNET

I smell an oriental luxury
 from him
 his suit is brown
 I smell an or-
 iental lux
 I love his nose
 ury
 from him
 's slender hook
 I smell an or-
 ien
 and he is strong as rope
 tal lux-
 ury from
 excellently built
 him
 I
 I dream of
 smell an oriental lux-
 ur
 him at night that
 y from him
 he
 I
 makes love to me yes
 smell an orien-
 tal luxury from
 strenuous love
 him

sweet marvelous
 I smell an orien-
 tal
 he's in busi-
 ness
 luxury from him
 I
 a Jew and O his sex ap-
 peal
 smell
 rien
 him
 from
 ury
 lux
 smell

MAYBE

Upon the cool brow of night
 Maybe appears
 upon the cool brow of night

Maybe, my nightgirl
 by putting two and two together
 be and may
 I made maybe

than whom there is no more

NOTES

EZRA POUND, now residing in Italy, says of his Program in this issue of *Blues*: Note that it is civic; NOT political.

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS in his article For A New Magazine states clearly our aims and adds to our original manifesto.

CHARLES HENRI FORD was born in Mississippi, where he now lives and edits *Blues*. His poetry has been printed by a number of magazines including The New Yorker, Free Verse, Contemporary Verse, Bozart and Palo Verde.

WARREN TAYLOR was born in Tennessee in 1903 and now lives in Knoxville. He is a graduate of Vanderbilt University.

WITTER BYNNER was born in Brooklyn, N. Y., in 1881. He graduated from Harvard University in 1902 and since then has edited various magazines and written many books of poetry and plays. Among his published books are: Young Harvard (1907), The New World, Grenstone Poems, The Beloved Stranger, Caravan, and The Jade Mountain, the last being translations from the Chinese in collaboration with Dr. Kiang Kang-hu. Mr. Bynner has built an adobe house in Santa Fe but spends a good part of his time traveling. He is now at work on a book of poems concerning both Old and New Mexico.

Grateful acknowledgment is made to John Cowper Powys, Benjamin Musser, Norman Macleod and Ernest Hartsock, who formed an invaluable advisory board in the launching of *Blues*.

An Expatriate Number of *Blues* is planned for the near future, containing poems and stories by those writers living abroad who, though writing in English, have decided that America and American environment are not hospitable to creative work.

WILLIAM CLOSSON EMORY

MINER AWAY

On the hillside rusting and rotting and the house. Anton and Tina and Lena. Singing with the pinkcrunch and a soup-song. The night smile and the day smile not but enough. While deep in the dark pick flickers and the washing in the sun white glint day and day and day.

There is no co-ordination. Fluctuations arose and were discounted vapidly. Figures appeared upon and were lost red and the mine suffered. Failures were and are the cause. STRIKE MINERS. A porter rode in a special car. A huge fatness was carried. Velvet and filet mignons. And Tina streaked her words while she sorrowfully. The boiled potatoes dismal and the boiled cabbage. His whiskers were lean and his gauntface. He walked down and they walked down and all around. Burly were the clubs and the men burly. They all walked to jail. Eat less and nothing so the lined face and thoughts. The furcoat fell from his knife. O yes the furcoat crumpled and the knife clattered. There was plenty to eat. But the burly clubs smashed pylons of night on his mind sky. The dawn swirled and night.

Then the faces stiffgazed on his misery. The goddamn bulldog and the precious tabby. Would I spoil your milk? I am not thunder nor am I god. All I want and is little. The whiskers brawny, meaty fists leaned and shrink. The fists screamed aromatically, slowly the odorous curls streamed up and up. Sometimes it was day and sometimes it was otherwise. Why should they bar the sunlight and the moon slide in shame-faced segments? The waves of misery overwhelmed Tina and Lena. Little Lena came and her eyes were questions. White was the outline of her questions. He could not reach her. Steel were the nets of division. She came and sat. Tina came and sat. He sat. Blue and burly sat.

They were all there but money. The root was there pendulous. Vicious and sheer cliffs of sorrow milling disconsolate mobs. Avid were the dripping noses dipping into shame. Exhibit One a furcoat. The black rip was a ride to another and life is short. Exhibit Two a knife. Spotted ticket to another. Where was the third exhibit? It was useless. Hunger

cannot be ticketed and exposed to scientific measurement. Whiskers in the heaven above his glare redeyed and the goddamn bulldogs and the fierce tabbies. Claws.

The feet rushed from side to side shaking and pointing. Knives slid into dark voids and scintillated. And the voices rattled and soiled the ears with excretions. This man and this man and this man. The faces closed about his mind. He lifted his hands as if he might but it could only be useless. The feet rushed from side to side and the burly ones. It was a calmness and the voice screamed. Back to wait and the uncertain certainty of it and the dripping noses dipping into the black smut poised in their contentment. Give it to us. Give us more. While knives on the grindstone waiting and the lightnings flickered.

A huge fatness rode in a special car trimmed in black and a black angel and black wings and a black harp. The scissored roses twined luridly. Watching and waiting behind the barriers. By the neck were the words. Whiskers parting a red face. By the neck were the words until. Tina came and Lena came and it could not be reached. The hands formed it but never closer. Black was the cassock and gold was the cross. Our father which art. The beefsteak was so juicy and red and the potatoes so crisp and golden. But Lena and Tina were sitting away and concrete pyrotechnical blossoms. Wondering while he slowwalked the thick stone. They looked at him and turned away. The black cassock rode in a cloud of misty gold crosses.

It was a long way to ever and alone. Easily he stood while the air was vibrant with adjustment. And the presses pounded their redsteaked yards and the dipping noses dipped excitedly. Tight over the eyes and tight on the arms and tight on the ankles and no light was blackbarred slipping out of the mask.

Then it crinkled and swayed. Exposed and the dripping noses dipped excitement from the black blood. Miner away.

JOSEPH VOGEL

BURLESK: THREE FLIGHTS UP

THE AWAKENING OF AN IMPULSE

In the college from which I graduated there was a professor who finally got kicked out but anyway one summer he came to New York and it was up to me to show that I still remembered the high honors he gave me despite the wonderment of the class. In a small college hidden from civilization and women a young professor naturally has hard going because he can't run around with the highschool girls in town, that is, openly, so I knew what was on his mind and my knowledge was assured by the stamp of his brow and the labor of his breath. See here, I said, how would you like to er er attend a fancy sort of show which from past experience I know to be quite good, listen—hot dog! eh? A gleam danced in the professor's eye and his not too thick lips had a hard job of it keeping on the straight path; anyway he let himself enjoy a smile of anticipation.

SO WE MAKE A TRIP

Into the subway we went because good writers and professors don't ride taxis, not because they don't want to, anyhow pretty soon we got off at Union Square, strolled down to Second Avenue and before the show started we reached the theatre at Houston Street and with pride I pointed at the sign BURLESK so that a wheeze scrambled around inside of my companion and escaped from his lips while he uttered Phew! Two tickets we bought and crowded into the elevator which was not so hot from the point of view of the professor because a man who does not live in New York naturally is surprised when a neighbor shoves a buttock into his stomach and another lets out swift garlic in his ear and despite the fact, the professor just could not endure to see a woman huddled in among five strong men especially when he himself was not on the boundary. So up we flew, up one flight, up two flights, up three flights and we stepped out, made a turn or so and entered the theatre proper.

THE BRUTE

Considering the circumstance that the professor bought the tickets it happened that we found ourselves in loges; my, what loges like the

inside ring at a private cock fight with cane chairs stained from tobacco juice which somebody up a couple of rows evidently mistook in his excitement. Gosh I hope we don't get drenched, the professor smiled and I answered It may not be tobacco juice but we'll get drenched anyhow well what do you say? At about this time the men were streaming in, some with women, which did not take me by surprise but the professor twisted his features with disgust and whispered God, what a joint you brought me to I hope I don't catch a dreadful disease with all these bums around me say where do all these hobos hang out, in the Bowery? You are not far from right I answered shielding my voice with a palm, only some of them live on Riverside Drive, say do you know that George Jean Nathan was said to have been seen in these very chairs? Who is this guy Nathan, he asked and I smiled Say don't you professors know anything? Just then we heard a splash on the floor behind us and turning around we noticed a terribly hungry looking individual with his cheek puffed out with what we at once deduced was tobacco and we settled in our seats resignedly only the professor got more and more disgusted, even before the show began, can you beat that?

ASBESTOS

It did not take long for the highly located theatre to fill with smoke from popular cigarettes and cheap cigars and then the musicians trotted out and began to play "Your little baby is got anything you want" which was a signal for the lights to grow dim and the show to commence. The professor again showed signs of interest and symptoms of whatever a psychoanalyst would call it (ain't these psychoanalysts just got the dirtiest minds you ever saw?) and then, get set baby, the curtain slowly riz while bodies arched forward as two rows of some of the finest shaped legs I ever saw in my life marched out from opposite directions on to the stage, wow, Well, professor? I asked keeping my lamps on the stage of course, Those kids are not naked, it looks that way don't it? but they got skin-colored underwear on, How you coming along, eh, professor? The professor did not answer and I didn't bother to get what he might have said anyway.

TAKE MY ADVICE

If you're ever in New York my advice is Go and see this burlesk theatre which gets raided about every three months regular, but don't take along your best girl. When I say this to people they tell me, Gee you

got a dirty mind, but why have I got a dirty mind just because once in a while I like to see a good hot burlesk show, gee whiz I'm young and healthy ain't I, my appetites is normal and I ain't repressing none of my emotions; who wants to become one of these crazy yanks who sets wicked eyes on every woman they sees, what I says is Be honest with yourself which you ain't if you got one of those minds which seduces even every married woman it comes across—I'm not that kind of a guy, I'm natural and don't hide my real emotions and I'll lay down five dollars to your one that I'm more respectable than you are, well use your own judgment and if you want to see this show all right, but if not then stay away and for Christ's sake keep your mouth shut because someday if you talk too much somebody is going to show you.

THE SHOW GOES ON

Jip is one of those natural comedians with hobo clothes and red nostrils so when he steps out on the stage all the old timers know him and give him a hand, I turns to the professor and says Watch him now, he's the main fellow in this show, God, what a commedian, just then a girl enters the stage the kind even a duke would fall for and Jip takes off his torn cap, bows and utters Will you have some wine with me my fair damsel? She gives him an uppish stare, marches over to the table and sits down so that Jip don't know what it's all about, that is, what she's after, because that table is his table. Anyhow, Jip isn't the hesitant sort and he seats himself on the other side of the table and drawls Hello Darling. Who are you she snaps and he says Ain't I met you in Detroit? I've never dwelt in Detroit is her comeback and Jip grins and sighs Aw, come off that stuff, won't you? you know I seen you in Hoboken what yuh trying to do give me a hot line of applesauce? She has to smile at that and just then the waiter who looks like a barber comes over and asks for the order and just as Jip opens his mouth the girl beats him to it and exclaims nonchalantly Make it a big big bottle of wine. This gives Jip an awful setback because he figured on treating her to an ice cream cone so he pulls out his pockets and of course they are not only empty but riddled with holes. Well Jip and the girl engages in the meantime in ambiguous remarks and he learns that she's a chambermaid at a big Hotel which of course is just the hotel he was on his way to, but he can't fool her. Just as he has almost reached under the table to her leg, the barber, I mean the waiter brings in a big big bottle of wine and sets it on the table wherewith the girl makes a grab for it and puts her teeth to the cork which

holds Jip in amazement because after all a man don't see girls grabbing bottles of wine and making for the mouthpiece everyday in his life. Try as hard as she can to pull out the cork it develops that she just can't so Jip sighs Aw and takes the bottle from her but he can't pull out the cork either so he exclaims a swear word. Pretty soon Jip gets all excited trying to pull the cork out of the bottle and he wrestles with it in vain so he gets out of his chair, puts the bottom of the bottle between his legs and jumps around the stage groaning and yanking at the cork while the waiter and girl shout Ho HOHO ho, ho HOHO ho, and suddenly Jip lets out a moan as the cork flies out and the foam shoots all over the stage, all of which particularly the climax sets the house off into loud guffaws and you can hear the voices of women shrieking above the hullabaloo as the curtain drops down.

UP GOES THE CURTAIN

and out comes the girls with the kind of skin believe me you like to touch having mounds where they belong and curves that hold all the aesthetic theories you want to rave about and God they shake a wicked leg with such gusto that the man behind us don't spit for several minutes but that ain't all. There is a leading lady with red hair she's not so pretty but the deuce take it she can quiver and twirl standing still which the likes of it was never seen before so that you forget she's got a pretty bad voice, especially when you're a lover of good music like I am. Suddenly a whisper from the professor says Some doorknobs, eh? Well I never heard the expression before but I knew that he is referring to what in respectable language is known as breasts and believe me the professor is right. Them doorknobs has little shields with tassles hanging down over them which tassles do not hang down right now because they are twirling around and around with awful skilful speed per motion of actress' torso as the doctors say. Of course what would you expect there is another shield over the dancer's not quite the middle and now that the tassles have stopped flying around the nether shield gets going so that believe me although it's a hot night, the inside of this theatre is hotter. Well this sort of dancing can't go on all night so finally the main dancer glides toward the side screens but before disappearing throws a wicked twist to the audience which flops back in their seats as if hit, and then begins to appaud wildly so that the dancer has to come out again with a frown on her face which she replaces quickly with a smile, you can't fool me I know that that poor dancer ain't enjoying the show as much as we are.

HEAVENS! A RAID!

The next scene shows a man paying a visit to somebody else's wife whose husband is a traveling salesman and naturally the conversation and leading up to it is pretty drole and makes the tired but not weary audience laugh although a bit fainter because after all there's nothing new in a guy paying a visit to a salesman's wife which salesman at that moment most likely is paying somebody else's wife a visit, gosh what a world, but before long a hush settles over the people watching because no matter how much you hear about it you get all attention when it's about to happen, well the man picks up a pair of pajamas and says, Well, dearie, let's go to bed and she smiles all right but just then an awfully loud voice from the floor shouts JUST A MINUTE THERE HOLD YOUR HORSES! and everybody gets scared and turns around and sees a guy with a grey suit running for the stage shouting YOU CAN'T GET AWAY WITH THAT SORT OF SHOW AROUND HERE YOU'RE ALL GOING TO JAIL THE WHOLE BUNCH OF YOU I'M TIRED OF SEEING ALL THIS DIRT GO ON MONTH AFTER MONTH . . . the actor is awful scared and gets white in the faces but pretty soon Jip, who is the man playing the midnight visitor, pulls up his pants a few inches and answers as the detective steps on the stage THERE'S NOBODY GOING TO STOP THIS SHOW RIGHT NOW I DON'T GIVE A DAMN WHO YOU ARE. . . . The intruder flashes a badge and the salesman's wife shrieks as does several women in the audience who maybe are not with their husbands but with another guy and it would be hell to get pinched in such a situation. Well, Jip and the detective have a lot of hot words between them and it is clear that Jip is helpless in the face of the law, so what does he do but suddenly turn around to the woman, stick out his arms and smile as he shouts SISTER, SISTER, HOW GLAD I AM TO SEE YOU AFTER SUCH A LONG ABSENCE and they throw their arms around each other and then Jip picks up his pajamas again and walks with her into the side bedroom and the detective leaves the stage saying Well, that's different.

PEEKING THROUGH A WINDOW, EH?

Pretty soon after a few more wicked twists from another star the show draws and comes to an end and the professor and I after walking through a lot of dark puddles and getting crushed like tomato herring on our way down the elevator, come out on the street and breathe a few sighs

of relief. What do you think but all of a sudden the professor turns on me and gives me hell for bringing him to a lousy filthy place like that. I feel like saying You bastard go back to your college and dream filthy and lousy dreams You ain't man enough to stand up under punishment of the actual but of course I didn't say anything because in the first place he was my guest and in the second place actresses on the stage are no better, so far as you and I are concerned, than actresses in a dream. Back to the professor's room we go, in a hotel in which dwells all the actors and actresses on Broadway, and the professor uncorks easily a bottle of gin and gives it to me and of course it is lousy liquor. Naturally I felt in the dumps after getting a comeback like the professor gave me, especially when I goes out of my way to show him a good time and takes him to the famous Burlesk, letting myself in for a lot of arousing and no results, and I says Well I guess I'm going, Sorry you didn't enjoy yourself Better luck next time, but I notices that his eyes are looking out of the window and I also takes a peek and what do you think my lamps lit on but a couple of the prettiest actresses I ever saw in their chemises across in another window practicing high kicking. Wow, however I don't want to show that I mind such a sight, which in fact I do not care for at all, and I says Good Night and leaves without the professor so much as giving me a look considering the fact that that was the last I expected to see of that rotten guy. I know his sort, he stinks that guy does and I'll lay you down ten to one that he's going to spend half of the night watching those actresses which is if they stay awake that long and he'll sweat like hell and think filthy lousy thoughts and slink by that window with his eyes coming out, that's the kind of guy he is. In fact, I wonder what kind of actresses they are and if maybe they sleep together or not.

EPILOGUE

Not long ago I was talking to a man who is a real genuine scholar and I was telling him a few things particularly about the impulses that make people act and sometimes think, when all of a sudden he exclaims:

Why Is A Burlesk Show?

Right away I narrowed my eyes and tried to look into his mind because how come the question just when I'm in the midst of a discourse on the psycho-metaphysico-behavioristatomic theory of well-formed legs, well he took me by surprise. Why is a burlesk show? I repeated like I used to do when a Dr. of Science who was really a bum professor once caught me looking out of the window at the janitress with the question, Can you

express the phagocytic power of the serum of a patient under antibacterial injections? Why is a burlesk show?

Well, I said, that question is more serious than you imagine and for an answer I shall have to delve into socio-environmental aspects of our civilization, particularly as found in the United States. Let me ask you, Why does a girl read the Saturday Evening Post. . . now hold your horses, I'm the one that's talking and I'm going to tell you a few things you don't know. In my office there's a sweet girl who is always reading the Saturday Evening Post. Now that hurts me, honest it does, and last week I goes over to her and says, Listen, darling, you shouldn't spend all that time over that wretched magazine. She comes right back with, Mind your own business, if it suits me to read the Saturday Evening Post, I will, and what you say doesn't mean a thing to me, you radical, you!

I didn't get insulted of course, considering from whom the remark came, and I continued, Now listen to me, sweetheart, I'll tell you why you read the Post and why your mind is really a pot of evil despite the fact that you ain't got no use for sincere honest statement of fact. That magazine in your hands is sweet and respectable, ain't it? You like it, don't you? You zestfully read until you get hot in the face and twenty horses couldn't pull you away, well, here is the reason: All that sweet and good stuff is actually the most evil rot imaginable because it excites an imagination like yours. You're a coward, that's what you are, afraid to read a good honest hot book, but when you pour over a sticky sheet it's all right to fool yourself, but believe me, your mind and physical aspects suffers for these reasons. Never mind, dear, I'm going to tell you right now what is the best thing for a darling girl like you and what will bring the color to your cheeks and a glint in your eye. Well after a few whippers I bends over and kisses her on the neck, but I don't get insulted.

Why is a burlesk show? I'll tell you why. This civilization of ours is rotten, that's no joke. There's men sitting home nights with frigid wives, wives with thoughtless men, how do you like that? There's men who don't know what love is and anyhow don't get the satisfaction their body requires, so they go around crazy and stab people in the back like what took place in the subway recently. You understand, I'm speaking scientifically, like a scientist. I'm analyzing, dissecting, taking things apart, all for purposes of exact study. There's women and I ain't exaggerating when I say that most of them are lousy goddam hypocrites. . . but I must not run away with myself.

Oh, what a world we're living in! Why should there be burlesk shows and what reason is there for a man to get excited at the sight of a chorus

girl's leg; what is that leg, is it not just plain flesh with bone and blood inside? All right, when the dress is down to the knee you feel curiosity mounting in you as is natural because even dogs are curious creatures. But when that dress is up, Good Lord, where is the mystery, what is there to justify curiosity? I'll put it another way. Let's say a boy may be curious, but what about a man who last night saw what a thigh looks like, he didn't even look at the naked thigh twice, and today he sees a girl with her dress an inch above her knee and he steals glances until his eyes come out or until the girl pulls down the dress, which isn't very likely, not in this civilization of ours.

And there you have your burlesk show with men, lots of them, getting worked up all over because they see dancing girls. It's imagination, that's what it is. You don't get excited when you look at a horse's leg because you don't imagine anything, but as soon as you see a girl's leg, hot dog, you begin thinking and imagining all sorts of things, really over nothing, just a structure of flesh, bone and blood shaped rather artistically. Oh, I tell you, we're living in an impossible world.

Now, do I really have to go further in my explanation of why is a burlesk show? Have I not suggested enough thoughts for you to form your own opinions? Must I tell you everything?

The scholar he looks at me and says nonchalantly, Well, to tell you the truth, your statements weren't very coherent and it was difficult for me to follow you. What you have said is in great part true, but can't you express yourself more logically, that is, more clearly, sticking to the point?

Naturally I gets all hot when he says that and I jumps up in my seat and pounds my fist in the palm of my left hand and shouts, Wise guy, ain't you, wise guy, why you couldn't follow the trail of a dirty insect, that's how stuffed up your head is with logic and premises and logarithms, but to show you what kind of guy I am, I'm going to ask you a question and I'm going to see how you like it, how do you like that? Now, wise guy, you want to know why is a burlesk show? All right, I tell you why if you'll tell me WHY IS A MAN? What the hell for is a man any way, and to make it easier for you I'll also ask what the hell good for is a woman, goddamit. Tell me, wise guy, go 'head, tell me, . . . never mind, go stick your head under your arm, I never ain't had any use for scholars and you're a scholar, go to hell, you bum, where's my coat and hat, Jesus Christ, did you ever see such a dumb guy?

MARK VAN DOREN

TWO POEMS

THE GAZER

No wizard now
With cloak and ball
Could more intently, greyly look
Than he in the chair
Who broods on air.
No wizard he, although his eyes
Have hoods of shade,
And he is wise
Beyond all hearing of our talk, untimely made.
No wizard thus
But would be winding
Through our own curved ways ahead—
Erecting mazes
We must thread.
He in the chair
Forgets us there
Since that slow moment when we spoke
Five certain words, and he grew still,
And his grey eyes
Became as glass;
Wherefore the room he sits in dies,
And seasons pass.
But not his seasons yet to come,
Nor any other's folded years.
What he looks so greyly on
Long since was gone.
He is gazing straight ahead
At something dead.
Something once he was to be
Is here to see,
And here alone;
And it is stone.

HIGHWAY GHOST

The gravelly road is gone.
Old people, whirled behind a windy wheel,
Huddle their coats about them and remember
How they went proudly once;

How the eight ringing feet
Flung gritty pebbles into the grass,
And how the four high iron tires
Sang in the sand.

Old men, silently borne
Where now the way goes black and wide
And smoothly like a river into the wood,
Old men, saying nothing,

See a white horse come curving,
Swinging an empty buggy round the hill.
The white feet fall without a noise, approaching,
And thin wheels lightly follow.

The boy at the gears, seeing nothing,
Roars up the curve, and the old men behind
Gasp; but as they meet the bridled head
It shies and deflects them.

Spokes flicker by,
And grey heads, nodding at each other, turn
To see between the curtains what is there.
Nothing at all is there.

The gravelly road is gone,
And dim eyes, drawn around a bend forever,
Have in them only history, and the fall
Of a slow shadow.

HERMAN SPECTOR

FROM THE LIFE

To Clara

I'LL BE GODDAMNED

poison in my veins maybe tears and gall to my soul
pain head misery hard strain waste
i frown wretch look look grind kill
she too through weeps weeps weeps tears down
break break break down
why why why
this is what i mean when i say:
there is evil
there are evil people
there is evil.

AUTUMN SENSED KEENLY

blood-red, the leaf-things, and some are
rust and green.
in solitude is autumn sensed most
keenly.
there is nothing sad, none over the soil,
none under, bewailing emptiness.
this silence is glad; this death
is profound.
when it rains, in spots for a second,
when a crippled boy comes by,
for a second there is a sob and
a weeping.
then emptiness; a cool question.
i want solitude keenly,
scraping of leaves over walks,
swishing: blood-red, or rust
and green, and autumn most
keenly, a question, profound.

P M SKETCHES

1

ah rain you so moist pavements
and foggily obscure lone lights
and smell me of the damp earth-air
i know its pleasure where the trees roots are

2

John Ward's sign makes melodrama on deserted street.
red-ghastly glow for a sidewalk's space
lets a lone bum pretend.

3

why acts become haunted at night,
no-one can say.
newsboys even harshlys message
gripes the dark like the death of a whore.

PAULINE LEADER

SLAVERY OF EARTH

DEATH

To Bodenheim

Poet (ah the few!)

menace with the no-more-than-graze of mad hands;
death ultimate implacable far-shore
where my ego's histrionics
the rainbow-paper-confetti-strings of my desire
are splinters festering the surgery of worms
you are the final genesis
ancestry and 'I' a conscripted one in renewal—

 the waves of your release
 are only dull-white-morning-mists
 but through them darkly large
swings unconstrained imperishable horizons.

For this, the few turn their heads, death.

THE APPEAL

To Henry Lavarack

A dirty rain-rivulet floundered in the long roll of the gutter,
only an occasional rotten fruit thrown to it
aroused its sluggish imagination
to a spasmodic somersault of pleased ripples;—
but I saw coiled within it
an imprisoned rainbow flash starved grimaces
to an ambiguous sun.

PUBERTY

The earth is your mind,
boy, turning over the stones curiously;
the worms are your words
squirming furiously.

SLAVERY OF EARTH

dreamless rigid line of Earth walls
bondaged angularity of corners
swing up
lock me in your bare frustrated room.

aware
I repeal
my former brittle song
"Earth is an area-less detachment."

* * * * *

I saw two pilgrims walking. . .
the man
upright
found in the smooth blue duplicity
of your sky-wall
the salvation mask
of his heart's softly exuberant lyric
"I am free!"
but the beast walked with his eyes to the ground
heavy with his frantic knowledge.

PORTRAIT OF A CRUSADER GIVING A HEART-TO-HEART TALK

beware beware my friends of the lure
of sleek slimsleek thighs of harlots
and boczebenders (myfriends) i am proud
proud i say osoproud to lead you out of
the valley little lillies of the valley
and believe me i cum frum the rolyholy
reeeaches of heaven local #7 to you
i stand 4square with love love love i
LOVE allofyou myfriends peeuritee is
a bellybusting banmer flipping in the pure
O zone getitandholdittoyourhearts
botharlots peerade in gingham in dearold
puritannia but beye not deceived i tell
you it is an honor to swishswash the peep
of purity over kittykatties in
goodgrannygingham
an honor and (yesyes) over the winewallowers
purity is enswaddled in honky-tonky hokey-pokey
razzledazzle boopla RIP it loose myfriends

KENNETH REXROTH

POEM

When you asked for it did you get it.
Were they many.
Were they hard.
Put the t-square there.
The triangle there and the compass.
Catch the evening
And the filmy filmy smoke
Pink and grey.
Question the subaltern.
Question the beautiful delicate lady.
You know what she means to you.
All slick and tinkle.
She leans on the arm of the master physicist
He wears a leather jacket and his face is silver
He draws question marks rapidly on the backs of envelopes.
are you there.
Are you waiting for us patiently as you said you would.
And did you get it.
o swift in white and steel
Do you know do you believe do you transpire do you intransitive.
Come to color.
relieving capture and devolving arc.
This is not for us this is for the people down the street with the
same name they have a little boy they dress him in very clean wash
suits and he sings all day.
Come to color.
Between the edge of cube and cube twilight thickens day deserts
the eastward windows the cypress groves that grow along the
westward sea.
Come to color and devolving arcs.
Claws are rapid clutch is rapid big figures walk past.
the t-square.
How white it is and how beautiful the lines look.
On every roof is an empty flagpole thin tapering tipped with a

black ball the fire escapes go swiftly up and down and the
escaping firemen go swiftly up and down them.

When you asked.

They were many.

There were a lot of bronze horses and marble goddesses and we saw
we must walk very swiftly across this square and go down the next
street and turn up the alley to the light in the doorway.

Inside each shop a light hangs above a cheap iron safe.

are you there.

Hold my hand and keep out of the rushes.

Nothing will hurt you everybody loves you and I want you to be
very happy.

She cried and said I've got to go I really ought to go.

The master physicist.

You mustn't do that he said we don't advise it it interferes with
the work of the committees and interrupts the sessions of the
congress.

goodbye o lady goodbye

When you asked for it.

NORMAN MACLEOD

THREE POEMS

LIBIDO: PERFORCE

Possibly i say to you possibly
this woman means something
when her eyelashes curl like blon spume
of day.
perhaps she may and maybe she wont
but it is an issue
that delights her.

A WOMAN SWAYED

Juvescently curious,
i postulated furiously
the integrity
of my position,
but a woman swayed forth
on the bannister
and i doubted
conviction.

LOVE CHRONICLE

the baby squalls blue river
with inference more.
i remember sudermann
and that other incident of the blue belly
with rouged lament,
but it means nothing
Hardly do i even kno
which one was 1st.

ALFRED KREYMBORG

BLACK CHANT, 1917

"We're going to get that goddam son of a bitch of a German"

I heard them shout,
and by the Mother of God and men
I say to such vermin
(call me traitor if they will—
stick me to a docile tree—
shoot me full of silly holes)—

goddoubledamn any bastard who'll goddamn a son of a bitch—
a son of a bitch is damned enough without goddamning him too—
goddamn me for lying down my gullet, heart and entrails

if I say other than I feel—
or if I run traitor to a German
just because he's a son of a bitch—
and though God Himself goddamn me
(spurn me renegade to America—
stick me up as a scarecrow—
prey me with a fleet of buzzards)

still my last breath will disdain goddamning a man because of his mother!

TWO POEMS

74

CHARLES HENRI FORD

THE ROOM

The room was disordered. We talked. I asked about her because. He told me she had a swan's movements.

"She has the movements of a swan," he said.

"Did you used to be in the navy?" I asked.

"No. Why?"

"I don't know. You just look like a sailor."

"Do I?"

"Yes. I don't know why . . . You just do."

The sun threw a golden slab across the floor, slanting to the carpet. Tiny particles of somethings were visible. They may have been the dust of a body.

"Who knows?" I said. "Those things in the sun may be a heart—or a lung, maybe."

"What things?" he said.

I went over to where he was sitting.

"Listen," I said. While the clock in the cityhall denoted the hour. Inexorably the minutes. He laughed then and his teeth were white stabs. One can't always be lonely. That is what madness is. Loneliness intensely. I do not know how long after a falling back on the bed and a hand being burned by a cigarette. Mockery in the corridor and someone speaking who could not be understood.

He said she had kissed him only once but then it had burned into his mouth right down into his guts—"God," he said.

NOTES

WILLIAM CLOSSON EMORY was born in Honolulu and is now living in Detroit. His work has appeared in *transition*, *New Masses* and in other magazines. He is also represented with a satirical study, "Love in the West," in "transition stories," a volume recently published by Walter V. McKee containing twenty-three stories from *transition*, selected and edited by Eugene Jolas and Robert Sage.

MARK VAN DOREN was born in Hope, Illinois, in 1894. His books include three volumes of poetry: *Spring Thunder*, *7 P. M.*, and *Now the Sky*. He has contributed to many periodicals including *The American Caravan* (first and second), *The Dial*, *The New Republic* and *The Nation*.

HERMAN SPECTOR, poet and communist, lives in Brooklyn, N. Y. He is a contributing editor of *New Masses*, and is at present writing a revolutionary play.

PAULINE LEADER is a young poet living in New York City. Her work has appeared in *transition* and in *Poetry*, *A Magazine of Verse*.

KENNETH REXROTH was born in South Bend, Indiana, in 1905. He has lived since in New York and Chicago, and is at present in San Francisco. He has contributed to no magazines other than *Blues*.

ALFRED KREYMBORG was born in New York City in 1883. Among his books of poetry and plays are *Musbrooms*, *Puppet Plays*, and *Less Lonely*. He contributes to various magazines including *The Dial*, *transition*, *The New Republic*, *The Nation* and *Poetry*. He is an editor of *The American Caravan*, one of the few important things on the contemporary literary scene.

Announced for the May number of *Blues*: TWO POEMS by HORACE GREGORY; FIDDLE, JAKE, FIDDLE by JOSEPH VOGEL; TRANSFUSION, an experimental play in one act, by E. P. O'DONNELL; and new work by SPECTOR, YOUNG, EMORY, FORD and others.

SUBSCRIBE

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

A NOTE ON THE ART OF POETRY

There is a thing, how otherwise to designate it I do not know, which if it should be expressed candidly means death. It is the most profound desire of men. Opposed to it is that which is called life, but life lacking the savor which can be enjoyed only at the brink of disaster. Whether this be sought in a game, in the eyes of women, fighting Indians, beasts, kings, ice, water or anything, the desirable thing itself remains the same.

Engaged in this pursuit, openly or behind a barrage of wits pitted against the world, a man has within him his only reality, which negates all the comforts, the legal pabulum which science, philosophy, history, women or whatever else it may be eat and thrive on. It is this useless thing which, held, is the sum of all male excellence in poetry as in whatever else it may be.

Its denial is occasion for the common disgust his former fellows feel for the voluntary spectacle T. S. Eliot has made of himself during the past year: the academic thing. What is our life today other than an intent to oppose that, to lay the confusion of our existence and our advance, truly, but not at such a cost? Definition and clarity we lack and must have; and there, in the classic tradition, we find both—but minus all that we desire.

It is truly pathetic to see and to feel how completely the living opposition to the classic viewpoint is lacking in even a vocabulary to give it voice—yet it is that which has left the classic behind it as a trace. Next to the rascality of our legislative and judicial bodies the university, the true home of learning, is the worst scandal of our day. Never has it heralded genius. Always must it be broken into by men of genius before its check can be removed and thought advance.

Its sole excuse and Eliot's likewise must be that in certain seasons the intelligence goes into the spore stage for hibernation, getting a shell of high resistance. Eliot is tired.

Poetry, like many another thing, causes men to leave life behind and go wherever the chase leads. To sustain men so intentioned was once the game of princes. Today the principle is practiced only by those who can suffer killing rebuffs from society or practice deception. But deception is only damnable when it fools the man himself. Make enough, hide enough, but do not let it deceive you that poetry comes of a run before the world, one thing, in face of injury—today mostly statutory.

That poetry requires a special soil for the poet who must be protected,

before he can exist, by a certain advance of civilization, or some such imbecility, is one of the first types of the class-room gesture—related to nothing whatever but all regressions of the understanding. Poetry, it must be every artist's first account to maintain, is unfortunate in the world, yes, but by sheer chance, or the sheer lack of acumen in peoples and their practices. It lives where life is hardest, hottest, most subject to jailing, infringements and whatever it may be that groups of citizens oppose to danger.

Poems are the tracks of all advance into danger. Otherwise, they are puerile. Not that men will have to drag cannon or invent ships to have made such marks. Quite the contrary. Poetry has to do with what is important in life, not that which is pure asininity—such as the commonality of statesmanship is occupied with.

Easy enough to say that. Not so easy to write a well knit poem of serious record. There is very little light in literature today. But the possibility for light and power lies wholly there for any man who has arrived at a point where the grossness of existence and its wholly mongoloid checks govern every action from sunrise to sunrise.

Of what is the childish milling about of cities and the woodchuck sluggishness of a middle Ohio constructed but the lack of all that of which poetry is constituted? This is latent power for men of intelligence and perhaps the sole chance for munificence left to princes in the world. It holds all the future. Science and philosophy we must see and insist on over and over again are completely spent as of any further use to the mind and to the difficult realization of man living whole in his world.

The whole world is stigmatized, maimed by its scientific and philosophic practices. The imagination, Man, rarely a poet, holds the sole outlet.

It is the grace of poetry that it does not exist by mouthing over it—any more than does any excellence. It may be the sole gift left to humanity, of any moment, both from science and philosophy that that which is just vacuity must be so stated to be and that to measure is to prove (perhaps) existence. So poetry must actually be the track of something, a firmness, a solidity—scientifically, philosophically if you must—before it is measured.

Still one may—I think—talk about it when not in action. Talk about it, not think to have seized it by talk.

By talking about it, to keep in mind, that surely nobody else—no matter how erudite—has a better justice to talk about it than we or to make up his mind about it—surely never those in “the sacred wood,” removed from action.

The "young genius" does not know the burden he carries. Poetry I refuse to see as the sum of all the rules that have been made to hedge it. It is, rather, the motion of a man careless of his life. "Life" would be in this case, the sum of all legislation and all "good practice." That greatest work has happened to follow certain ascertainable rules, after it has been made, is no reason to think that to follow those rules will make similarly excellent work. Or that in fact the rules have anything at all to do with the *creation* of the work itself.

Poetry moves in its age and takes the shapes that it moves through and is reflected in, word, line and image. It does follow a rule, but not a literary one—save as the rule becomes literary by having been the practice of poets. This rule is the one applicable to excellence, male excellence, whether it be in a game, a fight or whatever else. It is a direct engagement with the character of destruction.

The work of all men can be gauged as they strike along this common—or rare—avenue of action used by those of unusual acumen in any human mode of endeavor.

It is the same thing you'll see in a brigand, a criminal of the grade of Gerald Chapman, some of the major industrial leaders, old fashioned kings, the Norsemen, drunkards and the best poets. That Homer was blind has this importance, that being incapacitated from active service by this defect, with the common sharpening of hearing thereby occasioned and the desire for activity forcing him forward—he was able to hear, from active engagements, that which gave his work or his adaptations a quality which a man in his full power of sight could not have realized.

Men must always, somewhere, do what they please or there is no object in living. Everything to the contrary, when they succeed, somehow, anyhow, with words or a pistol, it is marked authentic. To write is dangerous. No one can say what he knows, sees his next door neighbor doing. He takes chances. Write what actually concerns him in life he is beset by measurers (inevitably and properly) to see if he has actually jumped farthest, highest. He is torn at by ridicule if it is important enough for the defences of life to be brought into action against him. He is abducted by women, if they can do it. They "love" him. Or by other men, whom he despises equally, unless they are more bent on another pursuit equal to his than on himself or each other. Everybody is afraid to speak. Censors are for the defense of "life." Ridicule. Retirement. The English. Morality. None of these things mean anything to writing. Poetry is imposed on an age by men intent on something else, whose primary cleanliness of mind makes them automatically first rate. Filth finally swallows all.

EUGENE JOLAS

DOCUMENT

This land, carpathian-rearing and aeon-soaked, lies grape-ripe in the sun. Beetling nod the ages over me, creative echo of intuitions, and the scarlet wood has buried withered actions. I have bloomed around the three frontiers, prisoner of the blue explosion, the roof-tops have nodded philosophy, a comrade has brought the future laden with sparks. Solitude is a tunnel white with nocturnal fog, and continents flash huge before my eyes. Belts of time rush through space. Often I have come back from my pilgrimages, bruised and hallucinated, and I have shut myself in from the words of doom. I am deep in questings, brooding I build my lies, my bones ache with a millenium. And yet I am so free. My eyes have set fire to the arches, and my hands have lacerated the static being. Near me I see animals waiting for death, the villages smoke with rotting, the birthright is lost in the dust. Once I ran through these streets, Novalis was the blond lord, inns lingered in centuries. Philosophy, he said, is homesickness. an urge to be everywhere. In the forests of Europe I have encountered the most baffling enigmas, and sagas old as slime in the epoch of the aurochs lingered about me. This land, singing in stasis and metamorphosis, winds its mantle around the hunger-striker.

My mother is an old woman with snow in her hair. She bore me under Gemini, shadowed by skyscrapers. I grew into the day amid the spawn of strangers and listened to the first rumblings of the industrial revolution. On the cliffs of the Indian river, my parents dreamed anarchic dreams, and crossed again the ocean in search of the ancient loam. My childhood blossomed in the shadow of a cathedral. Hunger for the absolute gnawed me, when blackbirds brought marvellous words of dusk, folk-songs sickered out of star-dew, a gothic wind blew over aryan strings. I bit my teeth into the steaming soil, I dreamed over almanacs summer-heavy with litanies, I drank the swelling silences before the chemical sleep. But wolves crept around the border-acres. Steel clinked in midnight watches. Temples burst with panic. I was a thing of chance in a river-roar, a nameless animal tracked in snow, a sunset in a ravine of clay. O conquest of the alien spring! Adolescence bloomed sap in my veins. I joined the pilgrims to the port, where the transatlantic sang its chants to the cubes. November blocked the fog, the elevated railroad rumbled, a city was borne terribly before my eyes. Now I am in America, I said.

the ruins are far away in the poppies, night sinks into my hands, myriad-colored and new. But hunger came down pestilential court-yards and I wounded my neurones in a loosening of humility. I was alone in the city, my heaven tumbled over me in numberless squares, I was an actor strutting on a baroque stage. What will become of me, I wondered. I loved advertising signs whirling electrically on Broadway, I loved the print of Mr. Pulitzer's paper, I loved the lithe women in the evening glint. Years sank into snow-clouds. Concrete massed its pathetic walls. I went into a whiskey-dream.

The steel-city hammered the dialectics of the day. Spring came with its rebel girl, the furnace flames grew magical, the houses of the workers were transmuted into castles, the rivers flamed with our fire. Cruelly the milltown lumbered in the sooty fog. But it showed no mercy for the lost, its words were barbaric gutters. We were alone in the desert of steel. Then out of my heart came tenderest pity. Weeping I sank into the dust before the tortured men and women, I bound their wounds. Luminous love for the weak. I was brother to all, o holy humanity, my hours were dedication to your deepest liturgies. I saw them suffer, their eyes were wide with homesickness, their children wondered at the greying day. Raging went the tempo. Machines carried me along, I had no longer time to dream, I was hemmed in by a mass. It swirled around me, darkened my deepest joy, shrilled into the sonata of a fairy tale. The demi-urge! Speed! Forward! One. Two. Three. Was I in step? I questioned my heart. It beat a furious rhythm. I have a long way to go, I said, am I ready to leave a beloved one? I shall go through tunnels and ravines, I shall ride in subways, I shall fly through the ether. Around me whirled the dance of Baal. Then came over me my other self. What is the thing that makes me destroy the loveliest essences? Moments came, when my fists clenched convulsively the throat of a man in a street-car, when my eyes burned holes into a church, when I wanted to stab a girl to death. Now I see the red stream of insurgence rushing down the years. But always I remained with the people I loved. A thousandfold their thoughts were in me. I watched the dance of the plutocrats and their feet rotting into the age of jazz. O man of dust, lonely one in the city's brambles, I said, I salute you: huge fist waiting to smash your masters! I sent my greeting to the man in the harvest fields who thought about God, to the man of love, to the man greying in the shops and stores, to the man of the terrifying hours. You, I said, the exiles, the vermin, the foreigners, will come like monstrous locusts and swarm over your stolen acres and rescue the homeless and frail!

Alien in the newland, I plunged into wonder worlds. I sought refuge in the climate of the yellow rose, I went in search of the magnificent mythos. I built a bridge to a land south of the rivers I knew. I roamed through forests tangled with lianae and colorful with colibri. Sometimes I opened my window to the street and listened to the earth pulsing with the insects whose bodies had captured laughter. The city of carrara was a magnet in white. Women languished on the beaches. I saw the red phenomena, corpuscles floated in the lymph of the star-light, the migrations ceased in the bushes. I bowed my head and listened. Humanity was a drunken afternoon, a whirl of silver wings was on the air. Reason was dethroned, rhythms tumbled gorgeously, midnights were soft with desire. I heard the rustling of sacrificial winds in the mountains. Lovely stood the houses of loam, the children waited for gifts, alcohol drummed in the blood of the men.

It is liberty, and liberty, and again my hunger is liberty. In the European city I found the dream moving in my sleep, I discovered the zoological gardens filled with unicorns, I met the poet scattering words on the boulevards. But the rooms were dusty with bric-a-brac, the norm beat its static measure, the Congo was no triumph. It is good to live here for a while, I said, my mind has opened all its windows, the step of the women is delirious on the asphalt. Yet slowly longing came avidly into me once more with mythic whisperings. The blizzards in New England, I said, tingle in the blood, the great lakes wash the dunes, New York is a miracle, grainfields sway into mysteries, men grow into bronze giants, it is youth bursting like wheat, it is strength singing crudely over skyscrapers, it is joyousness of dawn. The confusion of my heart grew like a tumor. No longer did the Orient hold me with its turgid hosannahs. I heard papooses in the night. Mobile lured with blue bay and masts. I saw the trek of the pioneer. I saw tomorrow immensely over my midnights.

Bells clank noon over the furrows, grass genuflects at the edge of the forest, wine flames on the table. And over the world there comes a bloom, orphic sign of the supernatural, lure to the home of the blessed. I am so atrociously alone. But no longer do I care if men come filled with darkness. Alone in the wilderness I shall not even bleed to death. I am waiting to do something in the spell of my dreams. Alone I brew my magic. New world, miraculous humanity of my mind. I kneel before you, dusty refugee in my century's shambles!

HERMAN SPECTOR

THESE ARE THOSE BACK-AGAIN, ONCE-BEFORE, HOME-AGAIN BLUES

omnipotence, abstract of the flesh
visualize
the time and place, eternal.

this corner, where i dangle like a fly
a space as mad and frightful once
feeding the brutes,
alive as you and i.

came here where no concrete,
where no steel, electric was,
mans labor and mans brain
spent, the quiet lavatory,
the speeding train.

no bulb under moon in cool nights,
frosty, frosted. insulation assured.
but dank, but hoar-damp, in the dark
beasts nervously leering.

click-click: now the city!
now brilliant night silences!
cautiously planned streets:

around a corner, dangling like a fly,
nickelinslot adventures wait . . .
concrete, steel, electriclights . . .

E. P. O'DONNELL

TRANSFUSION

Female Ward in a hospital. Six P. M. on the day of the first game of the World's Series. Two rows of beds, each containing a female patient. A DOCTOR stands by one of the beds, dressed in white, a stethoscope protruding from his pocket. He reads a pink Baseball Extra. In the bed beside him is a CAUCASIAN WOMAN. She is awakening from a deep sleep. Her face is beautiful, pale and calm. In the adjacent bed is a CONVERTED CHINESE WOMAN. She holds in one hand a Crucifix; in the other a fan with a dragon painted on it. The lower half of her body lies under a tunnel-like enclosure made of hoops covered with white cloth, through which a cluster of blazing electric lights is seen.

DOCTOR: You awake? Be quiet. You got a bad cut in that belly like you been fighting a buzz saw.

CAUCASIAN WOMAN: Buzz saw is right.

DOCTOR: Try to go to sleep, now.

CAUCASIAN WOMAN: Is he coming back?

DOCTOR: Who?

CAUCASIAN WOMAN: That man. That fellow that gave me his blood.

DOCTOR (*Reading Baseball Extra*): I don't know. Maybe.

CONVERTED CHINESE WOMAN: Oh, my Lord Jesus Clist.

CAUCASIAN WOMAN: What's the matter with the Covered Wagon?

DOCTOR: She's fixing to cash in. You better get to sleep.

CAUCASIAN WOMAN: Pipe the Dragon.

DOCTOR: That's to propitiate unseen forces.

CAUCASIAN WOMAN: She's playing safe. There'll be firecrackers at the funeral.

DOCTOR: You better keep quiet, unless you want another transfusion.

CAUCASIAN WOMAN: Who was that fella—that blood fella?

DOCTOR: How do I know?

CAUCASIAN WOMAN: What made him give me his blood, doctor?

DOCTOR: Try to get to sleep.

CONVERTED CHINESE WOMAN: Oh, my Lord Jesus Clist.

CAUCASIAN WOMAN: I wasn't even introduced to him. That was a raw deal. I seen him. He had curly hair. Who's he?

DOCTOR: Oh, the hospital pays him for that. See if you can't go back to sleep.

CAUCASIAN WOMAN: And I got his blood inside of me now?

DOCTOR: Sure. Go to sleep, now. Don't you want to get well?

CAUCASIAN WOMAN: That was a dirty deal. All right. I'll try to go to sleep.

CURTAIN

PAULINE LEADER

POEM

Across the morning I spear the articulate flight of a bird and make
of it the design of my private disguise against the uncertain morning.

(Once, the earth hanging half-way like an imaginary shadow remarked
the palpitations of your white heart, bird; you carried your flight ever
nearer to the sun-vortex; that was your reply.)

Forget the trembling bird remember only the triumphant solu-
tion of the sweep, Earth—but O do not unravel it! seeking the dusty
count of one more 'clarity' You can find merely an endless swirl
of gauze contriving somehow wantonly within the relativity of space to
be singularly free.

HORACE GREGORY

TWO POEMS

PRAISE OUT OF SEASON

Praise the dead (it is spring,
even the stars on a still night
are dangerous)
Praise the dead (the living have no peace, .
look, the girl is a tiger
clawing your brain,
there's no release
from devil god and women
following you through bright
seas at morning,
walking over a dark plain
at night)

O dead ladies please
rise
 rise
up again
with more than beautiful hair
and golden fiery eyes
making death no victory
but sweet limbs glorious
in the full morning sun
out of bed
 and dead men's whispers run
along the grass
following
saying: How beautiful she was.

Praise the dead
(tell how the more
noble caesars kept their
linen clean

and how the fair
quick faces of young men
looked into death
and entered)
We have lost the fears
breaking their nerves
and tissues.
Halleluiah, amen!

Since this, the deep season
making our dead lives soar
through roots and earth
into sudden flowers
is here
trust no man in the brief hours
of night or in the long course
of the sun.

Once more
the dead earn praise
while gray roofs lean
through green
fogs remembering
brave trees swaying
through long days
men knew
singing praise.

MCALPIN GARFINKLE, POET

It is enough for me to tremble,
my vital organs directed toward the sun,
toward the stars.
trembling.

It is better for me to stand at street corners
staring at women, seeing their bodies flowering
like new continents, hills warm in sunshine and
long deep rivers,
(even as I am,
trembling.)

than to be nothing, to fade away in grass and stone.

It is better for me to believe nothing
than to be nothing,
better for me
not to fight, to let cops and truck drivers crash
through my brains, trample my entrails,
o, let me cry my rage against millions,
carry me to the President,
up the steps of the White House
with my remains for evidence,
deodorized by the Department of Justice
and the Secretary of State,
thenceforth expunged from
the Congressional Record,

(but I shall be intact,
no word spoken,
like laughter in my mother's womb, a pointless joke with
no beginning and no end.)

And if you hear me crying: my god, my god, my god
down streets and alleys,
I am merely trembling (afraid, my god, my god,
to be nothing, to fade away
in grass, in stone.)

KATHLEEN TANKERSLEY YOUNG

TWO POEMS

SHEAF OF IMAGES

Like a sweetly new white shell,
and like music under an ocean,
under waves and blueness: rhythms and images
that pulse continually and are never still:
like a new white palely veined shell
broken to drink of the sea
and the sea's music when the night dies:
walking on the shore
dimness lightens and lowers
and a thin gull screams and screams again:
and under all this remembering and walking
holding your profile against my trembling brain
trailing a long shadow behind me
i watch a red otherwise usual moon
fly upward from waters and accentuate blackness:
and blackness and a light:
and under the shell and the shadows seeking
to evoke from music in a brilliant mind
walking over the thousand lives i have been
and having been, and having been,
continue to run their little courses and recede
like half noted music,
night showers no new things,
only old things that are somehow connected
with this dream.
like a sweetly new and marvellous shell
i break you and drink of the sea:
and a tall shadow walks behind me
and asks for food:
and my shadow and i walk, and the waters
over us, and the waves walk over us,
and the waves, only the waves.

LAST LETTER

The dream has gone under:
I have returned to where the cedar hills
Wear darkness for a crown:
I have returned and come upon
Only darkness and a stone.

The dream has gone under: sun
Now is black: where cedars were
Nothing now: where birds were
Nothing now: no sky nor day,
But only whirling cold oblivion.

I have come back to cedar hills
And bitter winds that seize
The lines of mountains, and bend
The branches of the greatest trees:
This is the end: this is the end.

Under stone and dust and leaf:
Under wind and tree and hill
Only blackness creeps and kills the brief
Hours over: this is the way we went:
But every stone and leaf was different.

NORMAN MACLEOD

TWO POEMS

ATAVISTIC: CHINLE

mud pots
did this where lavender streaks
prismaticly over waste,
olive where lizards go
spontaneously . . .
navajos lead nowhere,
nihilistic
gesture of despair
with corduroy
 For soul
raiment.

IMPRESSION

 they get pools
Of sapphire with diamond dust in
eyes, where nevada runs like
asphalt . . . centipedelike
trains crawl on spatial
infinitude, they get that way
o when crank sky of lemon
sways dizzily
and dust clouds rise;
not even sahuara prays for man
where salt waves heap
horizon . . .
 purity of bones,
you decorate the octoroon land.

LOUIS ZUKOFSKY

FOUR POEMS

I

Autumn, then autumn—what of it?
A train's windage sucks up the country.
Funnels of air,
 it seems, resembling funnels of trees—

so one under them
is sucked up as up the funnel's small mouth—

Hoa—hoa—and, across the earth's face
with the train, sudden windfall—

Curse it, bro, yours is not a tree's soul
to be shaken in standing by the roadside—
you who were given of motion in durance.

II

Finer was the dead artist's hand
 which modeled a fountain-boy's
first cause so that its bronze gay
 orifice made water.

New York's not Nuremberg
 since even a fountain-boy
must hide his tiny with an Adam leaf
 astride a fish from whose false
 teeth the water gurgles.

III

And to paradise which is a port
 And over water-trestle,
 And as over a sea so over: and by the way
 of this train's movement

Water-staves,
 Moorings, spread blue coats of water,
 Long,
 Along,
 Long.

IV

O autumn fields, if we should break, beyond
 Blue shutters, past boles of trees,
 And reach wind-heaving
 Launches of that lake

Who knows but that the
 Evening blue mist ferrying
 Would not perpetuate—perpetuate—our ferreting;
 We shall not be spared, who does not know it,
 The seasonal, who knows it as well as we—
 My nostrils, O autumn fields,
 your high grass, contenting now
 the search of acrid smells?
 A ferreting has torn the
 Heart of us and
 May tear always,
 Even after desired objects which were ours,
 Blue closed shutters, launch and water.
 Ours, near, and they toppled as old paradise, and the lips
 bite eagerly, blue
 Because blue reaches mist—in the cold;
 but eagerly!
 O autumn fields, the boles are bruised!
 As I break thru, thru, curse it! on crashing knees!

WILLIAM CLOSSON EMORY

THEME FOR A BLUES SONG

It was in Saint Louis I think
 or maybe Cincinnati
 or Louisville
 or Indianapolis
while the tall buildings swayed
like golden rod in the blue fields of night
and she came soliciting
 with a mouth like a smear of cherries
 across the porcelain of her face.
She came soliciting
out of the blue tomb of night
and the buildings leaned down their orange eyes
and stared in rigid curiosity.
And I said
hell dearie do they still get money
for that in Saint Louis
 or was it Cincinnati
 or Louisville
 or Indianapolis
O you should have heard the concrete
lean back and blister with crackling laughter.

PARKER TYLER

FRUSTRATIONS: FROM A SLENDER COFFIN

HE THE MORE, I THE LESS

This be my reward of him
The sweet giving to the gracious
All of him, though the breeze
Takes something from him which I
Kneeling, do not have

(But if all over
the round world
There were a coming all
To his center
I there should be first
Kneeling, having eclipsed the
Bright sun, reaching him
In his bed,
Better loved and more willing
To be fondled because of
Things which came before most
Sweetly in the shrinelight
Memory of the heart a taking)

The breeze that cheats while I love him,
All over the world will be in losing
Memory the part of him I hold here now
Sweetly in the bed a grim giving all of him
To what I want and will
The breeze taking being a loss of nothing
Given by the free will, he
Loving loss the more,
I taking the massive moving
Of the willlessness from bed and cover
To be mine the how he does not give
Of what he is, but what remains

Of willlessness is giving
What is taken at the mouth.

Fair owner
Of this paradisial estate
In cloud of meaning
Whipped in fight of wisdom of
The deep giving hence
The heart of man a chamber . . .
Live and die an honest giver
So I make a breathing
Wind and what I lose
Is national and overcome
By what I gain in love
A paradise
Of breezeless monitude

INSTRUCTION OF THE SENSIBILITY

This is the bough's life
Flower bud truthful ending
Better than two gone
Into the silence of air and ending
Flower talk twig strong
Is day most to troubadours
Not thinking backward lest
Two go severely air caught
And vanquished
Bough's life is main wearing
Fantasy needling door disclosing
Life not paid for or
Coerced tasted of changefully
Queerly not two gone
Though they went so boastfully
Brings tone of not-eared
Whether of cliff-bearing
Pain or sharp silence ever
Though two gone beaten in fibre mind
Creaks toward the wording
Blest by the art-sense

Boughs taken and shaken
 Are ever two-upbringing
 Innocently deceiving of images
 Omnipotent crazed to the smiling
 Of everyday living.

FOR SOME, PINS

such things are made for little dawns
 and the weak helplessness of hands pinned to them
 pinned to them I said
 for there is no more strength here
 nothing but the mind's coming away and the mouth's going to—
 which is a weakness

only
 there is a mighty tolling of memory for penitence
 as though all things rushed
 and flung themselves upon a sword

this is in the morning
 when little dim light
 is an urgency for these things
 terribly tyrannous laired in dreams

I have spoken from the heart
 and so I raise a stake up
 (against the pink poor little dawn of myself)
 and the shape is I am impelled to turn away from
 but I fly toward it wanting a redder dawn

and I know it is eternal. . .

CHARLES HENRI FORD

FRUSTRATIONS: FOUR FROM TENSION

why ears

why should you lie dead
at ten o'clock then carelessly
talk and rise into a gold awakening

then (tell me) why
should you as fondling
a sprig of heliotrope
draw in the scent through
two
chiseled
nostrils

why are you never specific

the morning is definite the wind is
you
are a ghost on horseback
or the image of a hotness caught in ice
you are the loophole in a hangrope
and i forever harmonious
discords sagging about your head and ears

n. b.

there the over
ripe fruits
bursting in the garden sending
putridbukes to the finelypowdered
o
there is a nuditydecay

observe the syphlipocks and vari

ously is it is
it necessary

note) then) the gaudy taxis
losing in the very brightness
hardly butterflies neg
lect the details

thirsts not slaked
with can-da-dry-and
corn but
wishes laughably are o

slough the bition of an applebiting
here is the focus of a withholdgiving
darling
jangle in a seeth of straw
ber
ries
and love the last of sickles on a hair

denudation of tributes

this
is the orchid
resisting the tracing
oh

this
spiderweb spanning your
thumb and the forefinger
looking as a mole's course
rankles in the buttercup
false as
spangles or the rainbow's
sickening in a paleness

laxly on the object
haunting and the filling as a pipeorgan's
notes say
incentive in the snowdrift

speeding for the hummingbird
reasoned on exposure
judas dangling from the loverope
pressing to a pullmancar
jostled by the mob at
(1) christ's death
(2) wilde's judgment
(3) valentino's funeral and the burning of the
sherrynetherland tower
lastly
lovers in exodus
stompsway to the *so long blues*
drugged by electrons
shivering in the subway
gods three now
ejected for a toolonghungering

poem

i stood in
great drafts and
felt the cries of centuries blow
by me touching my forehead i
averted my face from a sadness threatening
to slit my abdomen with a very
thin knife i stood
listening to the
dark lips
forcing flame and hunger from a saxophone
i knew
felessly
the liquid bodies of frustrations
i knew them filling
throat and nostrils i recalled
her saying drowning
is should be
a
love
ly
death

JOSEPH VOGEL

FIDDLE, JAKE, FIDDLE

RAISING A LEG AND LISTENING—A GRASP FROM BEHIND FOR A SOLUTION—THE POLISH KID WHO SKIPPED—WHEN ONE BETRAYS OUT OF HER TIME—IS WEALTH NOT ENOUGH?—fie! child with the flax hair, hie down Canal Lane with a wind scurrying hide and seek in-and-out your cotton dress—DOES SPECIFIC PAIN QUICKEN?—

Listen Jake, pull back a head from a cold window, withdraw a rapish glance from a pure kid.

MISERY IN A GREY BEDROOM—pull out a fiddle, Jake, scrape a universal from Bach and a squeak of effort out of your lips—Jake, suppress an emotion and harken.

Is not the kid young, playful in her age, must you defile, scourge unhearten, in a fever pierce innocence? Fact it is she's been tampered with, a drunken bum with a squashed nose manipulated to arouse Polish heat—yet give her time, wait a year, play a fiddle, Jake, scrape a melancholy tear from Bach.

TEMPEST IN A LONELY HOUSE—THE WOE OF A MOTHER—CRIES A WRETCHED BODY—life is sweet, yea, sweet as hell—children for factories, children for mines, children whose blood makes rich red wines, smiles on their faces and dreams in their heads, writhing vile snakes tucked away in their beds—hasten ye, hasten ye, hasten and wed, and bring ye forth children, children in swarms, children to make food for the crawling worms—

THE MAD POET—Jake, throw away a pencil, take away an evil eye, leave be and be left in peace, must you look, must you whistle, must you call?—ALLE TEG, ALLE VEG—green be the turf above thee, packed in tight and strong, thy life was brief (God bless thee), so may thy death be long—

Shame, Jake, shame, blushes my cheek and glints your eye—fie! Molly, this lad is mad, lecherous, seeks to betray you, away! Polish kid, away! hie down Canal Lane, flee to a tearful ignorant mother who lets you be and be done by.

MIRACLES THAT LAUGH—ROCKING CHAIRS THAT CREAK—A COLD WINDOW—THE SAD VIOLINIST—

Flowers on wall paper wither, a grey bedroom trots a mournful dance, PLAY, JAKE, PLAY—squeaks from the lips, denizens hurl above and a ceiling sways, a Polish kid from below casts an eye up and a ear to a side, pale skin grows cold, oh Polish child go home, go away, bewitch yourself not with a madman's tears, having paid no heed to whistles and calls, pay less heed to a quivering violin—

Cease, Jake, cease, the confusion overwhelms, the walls draw close, they will crush you, Jake, grey plaster leers and stretches a nimble finger, draws two pale fingers through your black hair, Jake for God's sake—

Lie down, Jake, sick you are, rotten in your vitals, lie down, lie quiet, lie still, stop a shriek, scare not an old mother, leave be, leave be—Jake, why don't you leave in peace a world of people, Jake, don't moan, lie still, be good Jake, sick you are, decayed inside out, stinking unblushingly, lie still like a sick babe—violin you cannot have, Polish kid you must leave alone—here, tonight, Jake, tonight I'll take you, take you to Lansing Street, all right Jake, leave a pencil be, murder not a line of verse, sing a lament and cast it to a breeze, but leave paper be, Jake, tonight, tonight I'll take you, take you to a house on Lansing Street, all right Jake.

DESCENT INTO THE STREET—WINTER WINDS—HOT CHEEKS—A STOMACH IN REVOLT—Polish kid Molly, come here, over here, a word with you, fear not, a word with you, listen Molly, Polish child, flax hair so smooth, pale cheek so healthy, a word with you, listen Molly, you're a kid, a bit of a kid, why don't you go home to your mother, your old ignorant mother, stay away from under that window, there sits Jake, the poet, the violinist, a fever in his head, a stench in his stomach, listen Molly, go away, please go away, a good girl be, but go away, up there sits Jake—please Molly, go away, you are young, wait a year, wait a season, up there sits Jake with a glint in his eye, desire on his lips, decaying inside out—tonight I'll take him, take him to a house, all right, Molly, here, take this dime, Molly, now run along Molly, wait a year, wait a season, now run along Molly.

PLUGGING THROUGH HIGH SNOWS—GRASPING FROM BEHIND FOR A SOLUTION—DOES SPECIFIC PAIN QUICKEN?—IS WEALTH NOT ENOUGH?

NOTES

EUGENE JOLAS was born in Union Hill, New Jersey, in 1894. He was educated in Lorraine and did not learn English until he came to New York at the age of seventeen. Later he returned to Paris, where he has remained, and in 1927 with Elliot Paul launched *transition*. His books include two volumes of verse in English and an anthology of modern American poetry in French. He has contributed to various European and American reviews and to *The Second American Caravan*.

E. P. O'DONNELL is a young writer living in New Orleans.

HORACE GREGORY was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1898 and now lives in New York City. He has contributed to *New Masses*, *transition*, *The Nation*, *The Second American Caravan*, and other periodicals.

KATHLEEN TANKERSLEY YOUNG is at present in San Antonio. She has contributed to various magazines and will appear in the third *American Caravan*.

NORMAN MACLEOD is planning to issue a new review from Holbrook, Arizona, to be called *Brogan*.

WILLIAM CLOSSON EMORY has completed an impressionistic war play *Glory*, published in March by the Argus Books (Chicago) and scheduled for production by the Studio Players of The Radical Book Shop in Chicago.

JOSEPH VOGEL has completed a book called *Taxi, Lady ?*, publication date of which will be announced soon.